

WEST EUROPE

Catalan conservatives beat Madrid-based parties in regional poll

From Harry Debellus

Madrid, March 21

The Catalan conservative leader, Señor Jordi Pujol, who was once court-martialed and imprisoned for singing a song about Catalonia in the presence of General Franco, today scored a victory over candidates of the main Spanish parties in the election for the regional parliament of Catalonia.

Señor Pujol's party, Convergencia and Union, won 43 of the 135 seats in the regional Parliament leaving Spain's ruling Centre Democratic Union a poor fourth with 18 seats, behind the Socialists (33 seats) and Communists (25).

It was the first regional parliamentary election in Catalonia since 1932. The surprise strength of Señor Pujol's regionally-oriented party and the relatively poor showing of the main parties were in a sense similar to the results of the regional election earlier in the year in the Basque country where strong nationalist sentiment weakened the Madrid-based parties.

The outcome of the Catalan election virtually assures the presidency of the Generalitat, the Catalan regional government, to Señor Pujol, who will also head the regional Parliament.

The election returns are likely to bring even more dismal

news for the Catalan Socialist Party, which is affiliated to the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, than for the Centre Democratic Union, the Prime Minister, Señor Pujol's party is expected to ally itself in the regional Parliament with the Centre Democratic Union and with the Republican Left of Catalonia, rather than with either the Socialists or Communists.

There will be no official word on parliamentary coalitions before Monday at the earliest, when the executive committee of Convergencia and Union is to meet.

One aspect of the voting, which took place yesterday, was the strong showing of the Andalusian Socialist Party, which won two seats in the Parliament of Catalonia receiving 2 per cent of the vote. Its support came from workers who moved from the southern region of Andalusia which itself failed to win home rule in a referendum there on February 28.

Shortly after learning of his victory, Señor Pujol said that the results should be a warning to the Madrid government that Catalonia can no longer be moved like a pawn at Madrid's wish, and that Madrid should move further in the matter of devolution, acting with sincerity.

Italian magistrates demand protection from terrorists

From John Earle

Rome, March 21

Rome law courts were at a standstill today as magistrates discussed the demands for better protection.

Their morale has been shaken by the terrorist murders of three magistrates in four days this week. Magistrates attended a sit-in meeting which started yesterday and lasted all night.

Meanwhile three leading trade unions have published a joint letter to all political parties, expressing concern at the effects of terrorism on the country.

Whatever party leads the new government, it must not adopt the methods of postponing

problems and of the non-government of the situation. But, the unions said, it must be capable of giving an adequate response to the problems of Italian society.

Union leaders are angry by a rebuff yesterday from Signor Francesco Cossiga, the retiring Prime Minister, who told them that he was negotiating with employers in public service were suspended pending the formation of a new government.

The unions listed tax evasion as a priority for the next government. Other priorities included employment, energy, agriculture, transport, reform of nationalized industry, reorganization of labour exchanges, and police reform.

Europe falters on boycott

Strasbourg, March 21.—Only Britain, Holland and Portugal voiced support for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics at a meeting of ministers of sport from the 21 member states of the Council of Europe, today.

Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Cyprus took a strictly neutral line, saying they would leave the decision to their national Olympic committees and not try to influence them one way or the other.

The other 14 member states also say the decision is up to their Olympic committees, but have not decided whether they will influence them for or against a boycott.

Even two of the countries

listed by the American State Department as officially in favour of a boycott—Norway and Luxembourg—turned out to be undecided.

M. Jean-Pierre Soisson, the French Minister of Sport, was most forceful in arguing against a boycott, saying it would be an intolerable mingling of sports and politics.

The French placed themselves in the camp that has not yet decided whether or not to influence its Olympic committees' decision, and some indicated in this a slight softening of the French position.

Doctor must pay for failure of sterilization

From Our Correspondent

Berlin, March 21

The Federal Court in Karlsruhe has ruled that if a woman gives birth after a doctor has attempted to sterilize her, the doctor shall be liable to pay maintenance for the child until it reaches 18.

However, to make a successful claim the parents must prove that the birth upset the planning of the family.

The court ruled that an unsuccessful sterilization amounted to bodily injury for which indemnity could be claimed. It found that even if the child was not wanted its arrival did not represent damage, thus ruling that the child itself could not be the subject of a legal claim, only its maintenance costs.

Maintenance costs for a child are on a sliding scale according to its age and provide for monthly amounts of DM188 to DM270 (about £47 to £68). This sum does not cover the cost of the child's upbringing because of the high standard of living of the parents, the balance must be made up by the parents.

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OVERSEAS

Mugabe aide discounts significance of country's colonial past and wants to start with a clean slate Zimbabwe plans to keep close links with Britain after independence

From Nicholas Ashford

Salisbury, March 21

The new Republic of Zimbabwe intends to maintain close and cordial relations with Britain after independence next month, according to Mr Simon Mzemba, the Foreign Minister.

In an interview with The Times, the first he has given since his appointment, he said: "We will be very close to our former colonizers."

Mr Mzemba said London would be the first capital in which Zimbabwe would open a diplomatic mission. He emphasized that Zimbabwe's historical ties with Britain, together with the use of the English language, meant that it was necessary to continue to look towards the former colonial power when considering its future economic, trade and cultural links.

"The fact we were a colonized people is no problem for us as we are a new state," he said. "Now that we have been decolonized we can start a new relationship with a clean slate."

His Government had already asked Britain for various forms of assistance, a request with which Britain is complying.

Mr Mzemba, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, exemplified the pragmatic approach which Mr Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister, has adopted since his party's overwhelming election victory at the beginning of this month. A man of little formal education who began life as a carpenter and became involved in the nationalist struggle right from the outset, he said his first task as minister was to study the existing structure of his ministry.

"We are not going to change things just for the sake of changing them. We must study what already exists and then see how it may be improved."

Mr Mzemba, in fact, inherits a department in which there is considerable scope for growth and development. For the past 15 years the country has had virtually no foreign service to

speak of. Its only foreign mission is in South Africa. Until the arrival of Lord Soames, the Governor, last December, South Africa was the only country to maintain a diplomatic presence in Salisbury.

All that will change now and a number of European and African countries are already planning to open embassies in Salisbury.

However, Mr Mzemba pointed out that although Zimbabwe wanted to have good relations with all countries, the number of overseas missions to be established would depend on the availability of funds and trained diplomats. He did not rule out the possibility of whites being appointed as the country's representatives abroad.

The basis of the country's foreign policy would be non-alignment. Beyond that Zimbabwe foreign relations would be dictated by what Mr Mzemba described as "the practicalities of the situation". What this

meant was that Zimbabwe's foreign relations would be based on whatever was in the country's best interests.

He denied that his party's espousal of socialism would incline the Government to lean towards a socialist state and away from the West in its foreign policy. He pointed out that neighbouring Mozambique had far closer economic relations with the United States and South Africa than it did with any communist country.

Similarly Zimbabwe would have to maintain close economic ties with South Africa in the foreseeable future. "We may not like each other's policies, but due to reasons of geography our economies are dependent on each other," he said. "His Government would not adopt a policy of trying to reduce trade through South Africa in order to lessen this dependence."

"When we start using Maputo and Beira again this does not mean we will stop using South African ports. It will depend on

which ports are able to move our goods quickly and cheaply."

Not decision had yet been taken on whether South Africa would be permitted to maintain its diplomatic mission in Salisbury. Although it would support the line adopted by the Organization of African Unity on South Africa, Zimbabwe would not interfere in the internal affairs of its white-ruled neighbour. "We are not going to start a fight with South Africa," he said.

In a separate interview, Mr Maurice Nyagumbo, the Minister of Mines, also emphasized that his first task was to learn how his ministry and the mining industry generally operated. "It will take time," he said. "I need to do a lot of learning."

Until today, when he was taken on a tour of Empress Mine, near Gatooma. He had never visited a mine in his life, partly because he had spent most of the last 15 years in detention.

He has already had a meeting with the Minister of Mines at the mine, to discuss the current state of the industry and the need for a study of wages.

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"We believe in economic," he said. "I think some of the mistakes made by nationalization were necessary. I think some of the mistakes made by nationalization were necessary. I think some of the mistakes made by nationalization were necessary."

He regretted that he had been away from the country for so long. "I have missed the current state of the country," he said. "I have missed the current state of the country."

He promised to stay in the country for a long time. "I will stay in the country for a long time," he said. "I will stay in the country for a long time."

He said that he was very happy to be back in the country. "I am very happy to be back in the country," he said. "I am very happy to be back in the country."

Sharpeville killings recalled in S Africa

From Ray Kennedy

Johannesburg, March 21

Thousands of black South Africans today quietly marked "Heroes Day" the twentieth anniversary of the police killings at Sharpeville of 67 people demonstrating against the pass laws. A further 186 were wounded.

In black townships commemorative services will be held this weekend throughout South Africa.

Sharpeville is 30 miles from Johannesburg, on the outskirts of the industrial town of Vereeniging, about 6,000 austere, look-alike houses flanking dusty streets.

It is peaceful and quiet there—and was so even during the Soweto riots in 1976, when the authorities glanced anxiously at Sharpeville in case it should explode.

Residents say that what keeps Sharpeville quiet is the memory of 1960, reinforced by a strong police presence. The police station, outside which the 1960 shootings took place, still stands, now surrounded by barbed wire fencing.

In a review of Sharpeville in the Johannesburg Star today, it was reported that one person interviewed was questioned by government officials the following day.

Nevertheless, the twentieth anniversary of the Sharpeville shootings, which will be closely monitored by the authorities this weekend, coincides with what is clearly a cleverly orchestrated Black Consciousness campaign that is just beginning to embarrass the Government over the continued detention of Mr Nelson Mandela, the acknowledged leader of the South African National Congress. He has been in jail for 16 years.

It would be an extraordinary development if the South African Government were to even consider the release of Mr Mandela, who is serving a life sentence for sabotage. But it is significant that black leaders in South Africa think they are in a strong enough position to challenge the Government on the issue.

But it is also significant that the South African opposition party, normally quick to adopt popular causes, has not yet joined the "Free Mandela" bandwagon. It is aware that, although change is in the air, feelings about the events of the early 1960s—when South Africa disowned its violent revolution—are still strong.

The opposition is also preparing itself for an early election, which Mr Pieter Botha, the Prime Minister, might call anytime. So this is hardly the time to resurrect old ghosts.

But it is not the illegal trading that worries the South African authorities as much as the attitude of modern youth. Materialism in its most western sense is the reigning philosophy. A person is judged, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* remarked acidly, by the label he puts on the back pocket of his jeans.

Mr Lev Kuklin, a Soviet writer, gave a vivid example recently of what he called this "predatory consumerism" which he saw as a threat to real culture. Some years ago he spoke to an audience of teenagers. Most were well-dressed, few knew much about art or literature and none had any interest in it. They began to listen to him only when they found out he also wrote song lyrics and knew some famous singers.

One youth, in American jeans and wearing a cross round his neck—the latest fad which has intensely annoyed the authorities—wanted to know how much he had raked in "from his songs. He had got a colour television, a car, a country cottage."

Mr Kuklin realized he was being judged, as he said, "in the western fashion," and so he cut the ground from under the youth by feigning surprise that the young man had never heard of his West German Uber



Major General John Acland, who commanded the Rhodesian Monitoring Force, being greeted by his wife and daughter at Heathrow Airport. He said his troops deserved "not one medal but two".

Trust launched to repair war damage

By David Watts

Aminid all the euphoria and self-congratulation surrounding the establishment of the new black-dominated Government in Zimbabwe, little has been heard of how the immediate problems of refugees and hunger would be tackled.

In London last night the Zimbabwe Refugee Trust was launched at a press conference to raise money for the work of the new black-dominated Government in Zimbabwe.

By today there were still 11,000 people in the camps, and more than 750 of them have been dismissed as a result. Nearly 3,000 have returned to work since Monday.

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Rhodesia leaders dismayed by spreading strikes

From Our Own Correspondent

Salisbury, March 21

More than 5,500 black workers were sent out on strike today as the wave of industrial unrest spread to hitherto uninvolved plants throughout Rhodesia.

The week-long spate of walk-outs and go-slows has so far affected 27 plants in five main centres: Salisbury, Bulawayo, Umtali, Gwelo and Gatooma. A total of more than 4,700 people have stopped work since the strikes started at the beginning of the week and more than 750 of them have been dismissed as a result.

Nearly 3,000 have returned to work since Monday. By today there were still 11,000 people in the camps, and more than 750 of them have been dismissed as a result. Nearly 3,000 have returned to work since Monday.

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RSEAS

Ayatollah Khomeini speaks out
against the 'brutal action'
Soviet Union in Afghanistan

By Allaway
March 21
Saddars today indicated
that the Soviet
Union's deteriorated sharp-
ly.

Khomeini spoke in
the terms of the
intervention in Afghan-
istan and occupiers.
Abol Hassan Bani-
Sadr had
suggestion made by
Moscow that "as a
nation we cannot
pull out of Afghanis-
tani."

Mr Bani-Sadr has in
made no secret of his
opposition to the
and others in the
leadership had shown
to support him.
impression given by
Iranians was that
events in Afghanis-
tani, the United States
Iran's main enemy
open diplomats in
d seemed encouraged
weeks by Iran's
o the Soviet Union.
ay, in speeches by
and Mr Bani-Sadr

dealing with issues facing Iran
the coming year, the United
States took a back seat to
criticism of the Russians.
The ayatollah said: "The
danger of Communist powers is
not less than that of America. I
hope the Muslim people of
Afghanistan will soon achieve
victory and real independence,
and get rid of these so-called
supporters of the working
class."

Mr Bani-Sadr told the huge
crowd at the cemetery that the
Russians had given him an ex-
planation for their actions in
Afghanistan in a message from
Mr Yasir Arafat, the head of
the Palestine Liberation Organi-
zation. Mr Arafat was in Iran
last month apparently to lend
some weight to the Soviet case.
The Iranian President said he
had proposed a five-man dele-
gation from Iran, Algeria,
"Palestine," the Soviet Union,
"like Sweden," and a Latin
American country, to investigate
Soviet claims of Western inter-
ference in Afghanistan.

These five people would see
if America is there and if the
Russians are there, he said,
and tell both to get out. He
said: "We said 'we cannot put up
with the presence of your
forces (in Afghanistan)'."
Addressing the Soviet Union,
Mr Bani-Sadr added: "If you
are listening we call on you
to declare yourselves un-
conditionally to withdraw from
Afghanistan as rapidly as
possible. It doesn't need any
negotiation."

Mr Bani-Sadr also attacked
neighbouring Iraq, which he

accused of organizing the recent
oil pipeline explosions in south
Iran. Earlier this week the two
countries reduced their diplo-
matic relations to the level of
charge d'affaires, apparently at
Iran's request.

Although laying down a plat-
form for law and order, the
ayatollah's statement was not
the ringing endorsement of
President Bani-Sadr that might
have been expected from com-
ments made by the President
earlier this week. It also made
no reference to one of the
President's main problems, the
the students holding the 49
American hostages.

In his speech, Mr Bani-Sadr
chose to interpret the ayatol-
lah's message as giving him
strong support, especially on
the question of control of the
military and the revolutionary
guards.

Extradition mission: Two
Iranian magistrates left Paris
tonight on their way to Panama
where they will present their
Government's case for extradi-
tion of the former Shah.—
Agence France-Press.

"Poorest monarch": Princess
Ashraf, the twin sister of the
Shah said in an interview on
American television that he is
"the poorest monarch in the
world" and she compared him
with Jesus Christ.

"I said that if it could be a
second Jesus Christ in the
world, he would be the second
one," she said.

She denied charges that she
and the Shah took billions of
dollars from Iran illegally when
they left.—AP.

Poles are
urged
to boycott
elections

By Michael Scammell

More than 100,000 leaflets
have been distributed in
Poland's main cities during the
past week calling on Poles
either to boycott tomorrow's
elections or to exercise their
right to cross out some of the
names on the ballot papers.

This is the first time since
1947 that the automatic elec-
tional process of Poland has
been challenged in this way.
Although it is not expected to
affect the announced result (the
true figures are always kept
secret), the government is
clearly nervous about the num-
ber of possible abstentions.

Voters will elect 450 deputies
to the National Sejm (Parlia-
ment) and 6,740 members of
provincial assemblies. The
single list of candidates is put
forward by the Front for
National Unity, which is domi-
nated by the Polish United
Workers' Party (Communist).

News of the leaflet campaign
was given earlier this week by
Mr Jacek Kuron, a leading
spokesman for Poland's unof-
ficial Social Self-Defence Com-
mittee, shortly before being
arrested at his home in Warsaw.
He was released today after
being held for 48 hours.

Fire suicide: A Pole burnt him-
self to death in the main square
of Cracow today to protest at
the slaughter of 14,000 Polish
officers during the Second
World War. Witnesses said he
carried a placard accusing the
Soviet Union of the slaughter in
the Katyn Forest.—UPL

Stonehenge
theory
challenged in
Australia

From Douglas Airon

Melbourne, March 21
A Melbourne scientist has
challenged the theory that
credits the builders of Stone-
henge with complex mathemat-
ical and astronomical knowledge.

Dr John Patrick believes that
the building of the monuments
did not involve complex mathe-
matics, but that they were built
only to please the eye.

"They (the builders of Stone-
henge) had very good practical
engineering skills in terms of
being able to move big bunks
of rock around using levers and
rollers, but I don't think there
is any evidence for them having
any great mathematical skills at
all."

Dr Patrick, aged 32, has com-
pleted three years' research at
Monash University in Mel-
bourne, supported by a govern-
ment grant. He began his re-
search on Stonehenge by
measuring precisely 65 stone
circles in Ireland and England.

He tested the dimensions
against the conventional theory
that Stonehenge was built to
precise measurements and an
alternative which allowed for
no mathematical skill.

Professor Christopher Wal-
lace, who was involved in the
research, said that there was no
mathematical evidence to sup-
port the conventional theory.

Dr Patrick said: "Modern
society is obsessed with roman-
tizing ancient societies and
making them as capable as our-
selves. This total fantasy about
them being basically modern
scientists is really screwed up."



Mexicans remember the Alamo: Three Mexican-American activists
occupy the roof of the Alamo in Texas and hoist red flags.

American report attacks
NHS's health service

By Lashman
March 21
A report on Britain's
Health Service has
been published here as part of
an investigation into the estab-
lishment of a government health
system in the United

States. The report
criticizes the NHS's
banishment of price
market for care under
has not created addi-
tional resources with which to
meet the needs of those
unwilling or unable
to pay, it says.

The report, which is
a study of the NHS's
performance, is
published by the
National Academy of
Medicine, a body
based in Washington.

Dr Robert A. H. Smith, a
senior member of the
committee, said the
NHS is "a system of
allocating resources
by the criterion of
pay, you automatically
substitute the criterion
of pay for the criterion
of need."

He said the NHS is
not a health care system
but a system of allo-
cating resources. He
said the NHS is "a
system of allocating
resources by the crite-
rion of pay, you auto-
matically substitute the
criterion of pay for the
criterion of need."

to suffer delay in its delivery.
Access to health care under
the NHS no longer goes to those
willing to pay the most for it.
It goes to those willing to wait
longest to receive it."

The report explains this in
some detail. It gives examples
of a person whose health would
improve more quickly with hospi-
tal care if it were available,
but who will accept outpatient
treatment as a second best. By
contrast, a person in less urgent
need of a hospital bed will
finally get one because he can
wait until he gets to the head
of the queue.

Looking ahead 30 years, Mr
Smith writes: "The question
for the future of the NHS is
how far it will keep the loyalty
of people who return from an
affluent fortnight in Italy, Spain
or Majorca to wait months or
years for hernias, haemorrhoids
or varicose veins to be treated,
after being summoned to the
hospital when it suits the medi-
cal machinery."

He maintains that the NHS
can now be held together only
by increasing state control.
"Unless the British are pre-
pared to accept increasing
censorship, which they now resent
and reject, the NHS is hardly
likely to last a second 30
years."

Dr Lindsay criticizes the role
of the government bureaucracy
in allocating health resources,
maintaining that it operates
differently from, but in a no
less biased fashion than alloca-
tion by price.

Hanged in
Kuala Lumpur
for crimes

By Correspondent
Kuala Lumpur, March 21
Three men were hanged
today in Kuala Lumpur
for offences against
Internal Security
Act, bringing the total to five
deaths.

The three executions
were carried out
yesterday. Officials
said people were still
in the awaiting the de-
cision of the
Teng Khan, aged 27,
Siong Wah, aged 25,
were sentenced to death in 1976
for possession of fire-
arms and for a
were rejected last week.

The first two batches of
appeals were carried out
yesterday. The local police
chief has been suspended.
Agence France-Press.

Indian lawyers
injured in
fight with police

Delhi, March 21.—Police hit
a judge, pointed a gun at
another and clubbed lawyers in
a fight at the Madhya Pradesh
state court in Gwalior yester-
day, reports reaching here
today said. At least 17 lawyers
were injured, two seriously.

The incident started when a
lawyer was allegedly assaulted
by police as he tried to talk to
a prisoner awaiting trial in the
police lock-up. According to
reports, this enraged a group of
lawyers, who manhandled the
policemen. Other policemen
intervened and beat up the
lawyers.

A judge who had come to the
aid of the lawyers was hit on
the wrist by a policeman and
another judge told at gunpoint
to stay away. The local police
chief has been suspended.
Agence France-Press.

Turkish presidential poll
no official candidates

By Pisk
March 21
Two houses of the Tur-
kish National Assembly
today elected a new presi-
dent for the republic for seven
years. The election was remark-
able for the lack of official
candidates.

Mr Ecevit has appealed
several times to the Prime
Minister to open a dialogue on
the election of the new Presi-
dent, but has been politely
turned down.

Mr Demirel's attitude has led
more and more observers here
to believe that the conservative
leader will not really mind if
the election drags on.

If a new President cannot be
elected by April 6, President
Koruturk will step down and
constitutionally will be replaced
by Mr Ibrahim Sabri Caglayan-
gil, president of the Senate.

Sources close to the Justice
Party say that Mr Demirel's real
candidate is Mr Caglayan-
gil anyway. The Senate president
has been one of the Premier's
closest allies, and was his
Foreign Minister in every
Justice Party government from
1965 until late last year, when
he was elected president of the
Senate.

the voting will go on and on, as
was the case in the election
seven years ago of the outgoing
president, Mr Fahri Koruturk,
who was himself a last minute
candidate decided on by both
parties.

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1965 until late last year, when
he was elected president of the
Senate.

The only point everyone
seems to have agreed on is that
the new head of state will be
a civilian and not a soldier.

OPEC, unemployment, Détente and World War III?

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Saturday Review

One last trip

by Richard Holmes

Across his diary ledger for 1930, F. Scott Fitzgerald scrawled: "The crash! Zelda and America". For Fitzgerald, then 34, the two catastrophes—psychological and economic—were mysteriously involved. He coined a phrase to link them: "Emotional bankruptcy". It meant that the party was over, the summer palaces were closing, it was time to go home.

The Fitzgeralds embarked on one last trip to Europe in the brittle spring of 1929. They docked at Genoa and took a set of rooms at Bertolini's, with a green tile bathroom suite and a big brass bedstead, where Zelda obsessively practised her ballet exercises. Scott began a story called *The Rough Crossing* about a successful American playwright, his drunken jealous wife and a heavily symbolic mid-Atlantic tempest. "Looking out at the night, I saw that there was no chance for them unless she could make amends, propitiate the storm. It was Adrian's love that was demanded of her. Deliberately she unclasped her pearl necklace, lifted it to her lips—for she knew that with it went the freshest, fairest part of her life—and flung it out into the gale." Such gestures still came easily to him, to everyone. The story was rapidly published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, a fashionably illustrated weekly for smart East Coast families, which paid him \$3,500. This was then Fitzgerald's standard fee, making him the highest-earning pure fiction writer in America with an annual income comfortably over \$30,000 and still climbing.

They moved leisurely through the Riviera in an open Renault towards Paris, turning aside as far as Villefranche in pursuit of a *salade niçoise*. To his agent back in New York, Harold Ober, Scott wrote: "We arrive in Paris April 1st... *The Rough Crossing* has been sent plus I've almost finished another. I hope to God the novel will be done this summer." But it wasn't, because first of all there had to be the Crash. The Fitzgeralds' whole world had to break down with it and a new kind of writing had to emerge from the ruins, with a new kind of story to tell: not Boom, but Bankruptcy. The strange thing was that Scott Fitzgerald seemed to see it coming from a long way off. Even before *The Great Gatsby*, in his least-remembered novel of 1922, Fitzgerald had plotted out the moral destruction of Anthony and Gloria Patch, an exemplary couple of the Age of Jazz, by repressing but useless shimmering socialites by force of economic circumstance. "I wish *The Beautiful and Damned* had been a maturely written book," Fitzgerald said long after, "because it was all true. We ruined ourselves and have never honestly thought that we ruined each other."

Many of the forgotten newspaper interviews that he gave at the very height of his success also pointed unexpectedly to some imminent catastrophe of a more than personal nature. Ambushed once by a young reporter from *New York World* among the potted glories of the Plaza Hotel in 1927, he was congratulated on the Broadway version of *Gatsby* and politely questioned about his Hollywood script for United Artists' latest flapper girl, Constance Talmadge, rumoured to be entitled *Lipstick*. By way of reply, Fitzgerald started talking fluently about Nietzsche, Dostoyevski and David Spenser's *Decline of the West*. "The idea that we're the greatest people in the world because we have the most money in the world is ridiculous," he announced.

"Wait until this wave of prosperity is over! Wait ten or fifteen years! Wait until the next war in the Pacific or against some European combination!... It is impossible for an American to have a real credo yet... There has never been an American tragedy. There have only been great failures."

The reporter was genuinely puzzled, then disbelieving, then slyly amused. He confided to his readers: "Here I was interviewing the author of *This Side of Paradise*, the voice and embodiment of the jazz age, its producer and its beneficiary, a popular novelist, a movie scenarist, a dweller in the gilded palaces, a master of servants, only to find F. Scott Fitzgerald, himself, shorn of these associations, forecasting doom, death and damnation to his generation in the spirit, if not in the rhetoric, of your typical spittoon philosopher. In a pleasant corner of the Plaza tea garden he sounded like an intellectual Samson prophesying the crumbling of its marble columns."

Yet the cracks were everywhere in the late Twenties for those who had eyes to see. It is true that Fitzgerald was not really capable of a sustained social or intellectual analysis, like his old friend from Princeton University, the critic Edmund Wilson, then at the *New Republic*. Perhaps he did make a faintly comic prophet of the cocktail hour. But as an artist, in the pale hung-over mornings of endless silent hotel rooms, he could glimpse the ominous shapes and put them down.

In the first of his post-Crash essays, published for a few hundred dollars in *Scribner's Magazine*, he would write: "By 1928 Paris had grown suffocating. With each new shipment of Americans spewed up by the Boom the quality fell off, until towards the end there was something sinister about the crazy boatloads. They were no longer the simple Ma and Pa and son and daughter, infinitely superior in their qualities of kindness and curiosity to the corresponding class in Europe, but fantastic neanderthals who believed something, something vague, that you remembered from a very cheap novel. I remember an Italian on a steamer who promenade the deck in an American reserve officer's uniform, picking quarrels in broken English with Americans who criticized their own institutions in the bar." The critics in the bar certainly included Fitzgerald himself, and the very cheap novel studied in for the one he could not bring himself to write until nine years after *Gatsby*.

In Paris in the summer of 1929 everyone was talking of James Joyce going blind, the new edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Sylvia Beach's bookshop soirees, Joan Miró's paintings and Ernest Hemingway boxing in the basement of the Club American and not giving his private address to the Fitzgeralds because he was drunk and she was mad.

It was the year in which the American novel made its decisive bid for serious European attention: *A Farewell to Arms*, *Look Homeward, Angel*, *The Sound and the Fury*. In 1930 it would be recognized and the Nobel Prize for Literature went to Sinclair Lewis, whom nobody had ever read outside of Minnesota and Main Street.

Hemingway's novel sold 70,000 copies inside the year, and he finally knew he had the edge on old Fitz. As for bankruptcy, he was totting his own theories. A young man should make love very seldom, said Hemingway, or he would have nothing left in middle age. The number of available orgasms was fixed at birth and could be expended too soon. As for a novel, the only thing to do with one was to finish it.

"The good parts of a novel might be something a writer was lucky enough to overhear or they might be the wreckage of his whole damned life. The artist should not worry over the loss of his early bloom. People

were not peaches." The Fitzgeralds hurried south again, to ripen off in the sun at Cannes.

Relations between Scott and Zelda were strained to breaking point. In the daytime there was Scott and the beach; but at night it was a war of attrition. For a moment, Hemingway became Fitzgerald's confessor. He wrote: "My latest tendency is to collapse about 11 pm and with the tears flowing from my eyes or the gin rising to their level and leaking over, tell interested friends of acquaintances that I haven't a friend in the world and likewise care for nobody, generally including Zelda, and often implying current company—after which the current company tend to become less current and I wake up in strange rooms in strange places. The rest of the time I stay alone working or trying to work or brooding or reading detective stories."

Loss of grip on his writing haunted Fitzgerald like a nightmare or a wasting fever. "Your analysis of my inability to get my serious work done is too kind in that it leaves out the dissipation, but among acts of God it is possible that the five years between my leaving the army and finishing *Gatsby* (1919-1924), which included three novels, about 50 popular stories and a play and numerous articles, movies, may have taken all I had to say too early, adding that all the time we were living at top speed in the gayest worlds we could find. This *au fond* is what really worries me..."

But Fitzgerald also saw the same sickness and emptiness in those around him. He took to quizzing and questioning their rich friends, the Gerald Murphys, with a detached "supercilious scrutiny," as if they had suddenly stopped being old acquaintances and become rare members of a dying species. You can't expect anyone to like or stand up to a continual feeling of analysis and sub-analysis, and criticism—on the whole unfriendly," wrote Sara Murphy, and stopped inviting him round.

As autumn came, hot and dusty over the corniches, and swimming was over and "the year's octopus had grown up in the crevices of the rocks," the Fitzgeralds moved restlessly from resort to resort. On the night of the Wall Street Crash in October they were staying at the hotel Beau-Rivage in St. Raphael, which had stained-glass windows in the Mediterranean. "Off there in a little village, we had such a horrible feeling of insecurity," Fitzgerald said later. "We had so little information from home, and we kept hearing these reports about business conditions until we didn't know but that at any moment the United States would go smash and we'd be cut adrift." But they were far adrift already.

Letters, arrived from New York from his publisher Maxwell Perkins, from Edmund Wilson, begging them to come home. But it was not yet time. They returned to Paris and wintered miserably in a luxurious apartment at 10 rue Pergolèse, near the Bois de Boulogne. Zelda died and danced for hours each day at Madame Egarova's unheated studio and typed *Flapper* articles for *College Humor*. Scott drank at the Ritz bar with wide-eyed Princeton tutors and wrote disjointed social sketches for *The New Yorker* and *McCall's*, followed by odd communications to Harold Ober.

"New Yorker offers OK" but uninteresting—as for Mrs.

Angell (whoever she is) I will gladly modify my style and subject matter for her but she will have to give me her beautiful body first and I dare say the price is too high." When *McCall's* turned down a piece entitled *Girls Believe in Girls* he threatened to sue them. His fee for *Post* stories rose to \$4,000. Then the cruellest month finally came round.

On April 23, 1930, Zelda Fitzgerald, aged 29, was admitted *en cas d'urgence* to the psychiatric hospital outside Paris, suffering from nervous exhaustion and delusions. Two months later she had been moved to a large country-house asylum called Les Rives de Prangins, 12 miles outside Geneva, on the shores of the lake. The initial diagnosis by Dr. Otto Forel was schizophrenia, aggravated by Scott's drinking and intense mutual competitiveness. A plan to consult Carl Jung in Zurich (recommended by Edmund Wilson) was abandoned since Jung was reported only to treat neurotic cases. Zelda was to remain at Prangins for 16 months, sometimes skiing and basket-weaving, at other times suffering terrible relapses, hallucinations and agonising seizures. A short story she had written "would be incomprehensible," Scott told Maxwell Perkins. "Without a *Waste Land* footnote." Now the Crash had really come, and Fitzgerald found himself in a new kind of Europe, chilly and alien, the brooding world of Thomas Mann's *Magical Mountain* and T. S. Eliot's sombre poetry.

For five months Fitzgerald wrote virtually nothing except two *Post* stories. His visits to Prangins were strictly limited. He spent time sending notes and flowers to Zelda and assembling a diagnostic dossier for Dr. Forel. He lived in hotels in Lausanne, and commuted monthly to Paris, where little Scottie was staying with in-laws.

In the whole of his well-publicized career since 1920 this is the most obscure, the least documented, the most private episode. He saw almost nobody. One of the few exceptions was a night he got drunk with Thomas Wolfe in a little Alpine village and dreamed Wolfe had reached up and fused all the power-lines and they ran away over the hill. Edmund Wilson, who had himself recently recovered from a minor breakdown, received a brief letter in New York. "The thought that you'd survived it helped me through some despairing moments in Zelda's case."

She was drunk with music that seemed a crazy opiate to her and her whole cerebral tradition was something locked in such an absolutely impenetrable safe inside her that it was months before the doctors could reach her at all. We hope to get home for Christmas." But not yet, not yet.

Blame, responsibility, guilt—these questions were to torture what remained of the Fitzgerald private lives together. Clearly there had been some element of a lover's self-destructive pact. Years later Scott was to write to an American psychiatrist at Zelda's clinic in Baltimore: "Liquor on my mouth is sweet to her. I cherish her most extravagant hallucinations."

Equally clearly they had

exploited each other—and the professional exploiter, the writer, had won, if only because his craft ultimately gave him the greater survival power. Indeed one can sometimes believe that Zelda deliberately sacrificed herself to provide Scott with literary material. (The issue is examined in depth in a remarkable biography of Zelda by Nancy Milford, drawing on both Prangins and Baltimore clinical files.) Yet the photograph albums they kept during this whole period show a different, simpler human truth: they show Zelda's drawn, dark dissatisfaction with herself and Scott's ever-anxious, ever-hopeful, wounded kindness.

The Crash also produced a slow, painful transformation in the artist. Ultimately this destroyed Fitzgerald's marketability as a popular American magazine writer (he received his first rejection slip for a decade, from the *Post* in January 1931, and thereafter his price fell steadily); but it also gave him the breakthrough into his elusive novel, *Tender is the Night*. Sometimes in the autumn of 1930, in one of those lonely Swiss hotel rooms, Fitzgerald wrote a brilliant 20-page short story entitled *One Trip Abroad*, which set out a kind of scale-map or blueprint for the full-size work he would eventually complete in America in 1934.

Nicole and Nelson Kelly are a young, moneyed, intelligent and handsome American couple who come to Europe in search of self-fulfilment. They are gifted, modest and intensely alive. What they lack is simply the toughness and self-knowledge that comes from having to work and struggle to exist in a series of short, beautifully observed and graduated scenes, their emotions and ideals are progressively bankrupted by the aimlessness of their drifting expatriate life in search of the good life, "the carnival by the sea". With a new, coldly glittering authority, Fitzgerald executes in this story a miniature five-act gothic tragedy, complete with doppelgänger, lavish European backdrops and dramatic weather effects, in a tradition that belongs to the haunted moral tales of Brockden Brown, Hawthorne and Henry James, but which is also something strikingly original—the mature Fitzgerald, post-*Gatsby*, post-Crash.

The madness which becomes a central force in *Tender is the Night* ("through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways"), as an emblem of the entire decade, here still exists only in the form of an Alpine storm. But Fitzgerald found that his experience both as a man and an artist had combined again into a single perception. He had found his subject once more, and now it was tragic.

"This is the story of a trip abroad, and the geographical element must not be slighted. Having visited North Africa, Italy, the Riviera, Paris and points in between, it was not

surprising that eventually the Kellys should go to Switzerland. Switzerland is a country where very few things begin, but many things end."

"Though there was an element of choice in their other ports of call, the Kellys went to Switzerland because they had. They had been married a little more than four years when they arrived one spring day at the lake that is the centre of Europe—a placid, smiling spot with pastoral hillsides, a backdrop of mountains and waters of postcard blue, waters that are a little shalier beneath the surface with all the misery that has dragged itself here from every corner of Europe. Weariness to recuperate and death to die. There are schools, too, and young people splashing at the sunny plages; there is Buny's dungen and Calvin's city and the ghosts of Byron and Shelley still sail the dim shores by night; but the Lake Geneva that Nelson and Nicole came to was transformed. Their glamour had faded, they are sick, used up, probably doomed. Their failure to understand their own position, their own fate, is presented with cool, almost kindly detachment. The sense of finally reaching the dead centre of the expatriate experience, the Lake of Geneva like a drainhole of wasted emotions, a prettily disguised maelstrom, "sinister beneath the surface with all the misery that has dragged itself here" is powerfully suggested.

Pearl necklaces do not have to be thrown to mark the spot. Nor are the references to Byron and Shelley merely coincidental, *renseignements touristiques*. They bid farewell to the departing shapes of an entire Romantic tradition, which Fitzgerald had once hoped to emulate in the *Gatsby* days, to relive and renew by combining literary imagination with commercial wealth. Art and the Good Life, the Old World and the New, in a kind of perpetual carnival, the "many fêtes" with which he was to dedicate *Tender is the Night* to the Murphys. The Murphys who were themselves to become ghostlike denizens of the Swiss sanatoriums, one of their children fatally ill and their business at home falling.

The moral, if there is ever a moral in art, was one written a century earlier by the expatriate Shelley in Venice: "They learn in suffering what they teach in song." Almost as a symbol of the passing of the old order, Fitzgerald received a telegram in January, 1931, that his beloved father had died in Maryland.

The stories and autobiographical pieces which Fitzgerald fitfully wrote over the next 18 months are among the most memorable, and for the European reader the most accessible, of his entire work. They include the famous *Babylon Revisited* (December, 1930, based on a visit to Scottie in Paris); *Echoes of the Jazz Age* (August, 1931); *Crazy Sundays* (December, 1931, set in Hollywood); *Family in the Wind* (spring, 1932); and *My Lost City* (July, 1932, describing New York in a manner comparable to Baudelaire's prose poems about Paris). They point forward not only to the novel, but also to the series of confessional *Crack-up* pieces

which Edmund Wilson faithfully saved and edited for his old friend, long after—in 1945, when he was almost forgotten. Fitzgerald found the increasingly difficult to place in magazines, and his income after reaching the dizzy heights of \$37,000 in 1931 (most of it absorbed by sanatorium bills), collapsed numbly to \$16,000 in 1932. His own personal Crash was complete.

At Prangins, Zelda's temporary cure was at last announced in June 1931. They spent a brief final holiday at Annecy, and Zelda later wrote a rambling article carefully cut and polished by Scott. "We walked at night towards a café blooming with Japanese lanterns, white shoes gleaming like radium in the damp darkness. It was like the good gone times when we still believed in summer hotels and the philosophies of popular songs. Another night we danced a Wiener waltz, and just simply swept around."

Fitzgerald's new grip on "their material" is even shown in his exhorting writing: "Another night we learned to Wiener waltz, and once we regimented our dreams to the imperative commands of a nostalgic orchestra floating down the formal paths of the garden of a better hotel—" but he was having none of it.

In September 1931 the Fitzgeralds finally took the boat home to America, and the Depression. Even in his personal unhappiness and exhaustion, Scott was acutely aware that they were just one tiny part of some sort of mass exodus, some sort of general American retreat, and that the new decade would be hard, dangerous and uncertain. Edmund Wilson was already summing the country, writing a set of social conscience articles which would become *The American Litters*. Fitzgerald mailed on ahead of him a deadpan story entitled *Between Three and Four* with a wooden plot about a businessman leaping from a skyscraper window. But the opening paragraph had an altogether different, more moving resonance:

"This happened nowadays, with everyone somewhat discouraged. A lot of less fortunate spirits cracked when money troubles came to be added to all this nervous troubles accumulated in the prosperity-neurosis being a privilege of people with a lot of extra money. And some cracked merely because it was in the air, or because they were used to the great, golden figure of plenty standing behind them, as the idea of prudence and glory stands behind the French, and the idea of 'the thing to do' to stand behind the English. Almost everyone cracked a little."

The *Saturday Evening Post* printed it grudgingly, and the magazine's policy had happy endings, and was already becoming. Soon they stopped paying names on the cover.

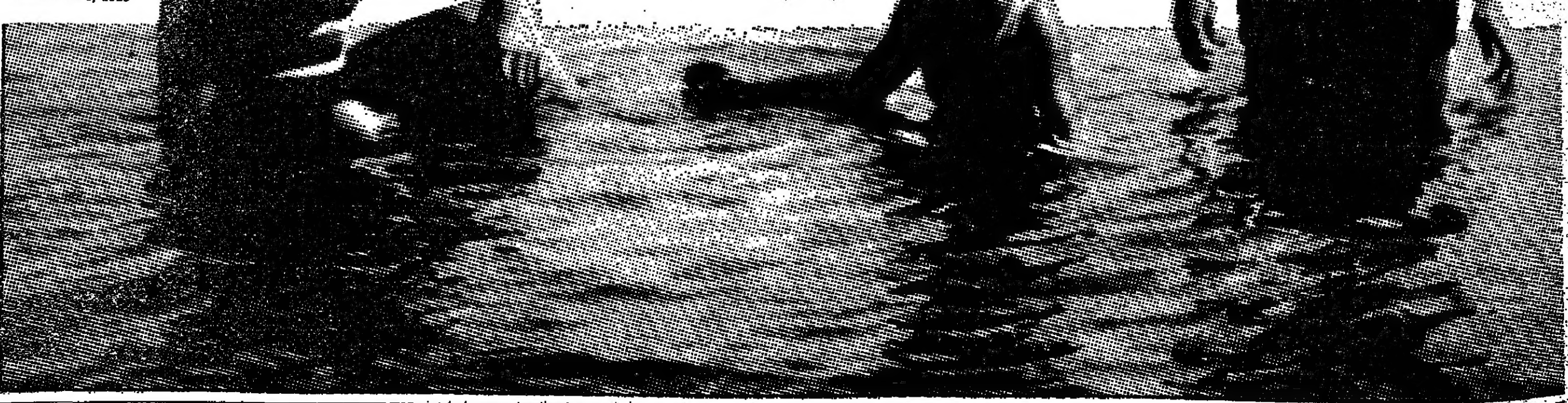
After a brief stop-over in York, the Fitzgeralds went to Alabama and settled in a gomery, near Zelda's mother. They bought a *Studebaker*, a white *Chrysler*, and a dog. Trouble, it was time to all over again. The wife Fitzgerald in his books, "shows in the ability to persist in the ability to start over." Zelda, would be better. The novel would be a sure America would be.

But Fitzgerald never something that had happened the moment of their coming America, after all their sines, "in the dark and two-years later." The disembarked on a Mag Island to discover a portentous shape on the horizon. It was the State Building, just a completion, a manna something that Fitzgerald the novel would be a sure America would be. "Just as it had tradition of mine to the of the beautiful city, as far as eyes could see now I went to the roof last, and most magnificent towers. Then I understood everything was explained. I had discovered the error of the city, its box full of vaulting, no New Yorker had climbed and seen with dismay it had never suspected. The city was not the eagle, as supposed but that it was from the tallest strand saw for the first time, faded out into the coma all sides, into an empty green and blue that old limitations. And with the realization that New York, a city after all and universe, the whole edifice that he had res his imagination, came to the ground."

The original draft of *Lost City* is now lodged in the Manuscript Department of the University of California. Scott Fitzgerald's old Coast university, where the scholars of endless pilgrimage, O typescript, the word "and" has been pencilled in between two words, a deleted phrase was: "a map, palace". After 1930, Fitzgerald knew there could be no palaces.

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Grateful acknowledgements due to Frances Scott Fitzgerald, Mary Hemingway, Charles Scribner's sons, and Jean Preston, Curator of the author would like to be in the Princeton University Library.

The Fitzgeralds with daughter Scottie at Cannes in the summer of 1929



Good Food

Playing an exotic role

go to restaurants and other dishes collected here in recent weeks include well-known soups (50p) such as santan (Jullienne of chicken and spicy coconut milk) and soto madura (chicken with egg, vermicelli and vegetables), crisp perkedel (potato cake), vividly red but mild sambal udang (fresh large prawns with fresh pineapple pieces), and the sweet cold ice popok based on pureed avocado.

If you cannot identify a taste, sesame oil, peanut, blackish (the rotter salt-fish of South-east Asia) or coconut may well have something to do with it.

Equally, equatorial is the Equatorial, in another busy Soho street, which even has the equivalent of a Singaporean stall run by a girl who doubles as a waitress and a chef. The result is a more varied and crisper than it sometimes is when satay has to take its turn with other orders in the main kitchen, and more complex cooked dishes in Nonya style succeed too. Try one of Henry Tan's fish dishes in tamarind sauce, perhaps, or ayam sampa (chicken in soyabean sauce with onions and chilli). £1.70 which was "delicious if you picked out the huge pieces of fresh red and green chillies rather than swallowing them and hoping for the salad and sago sweets to soothe you down".

Besides, since The Times readers often wonder where they can obtain afternoon tea in central London, it is worth mentioning that tea and Singaporean delicacies are served from 3 pm to 6 pm.

Outside London, Oxford (predictably) is equally privileged, for Ethel Ows very small and simple Indonesian-Malay Munchy, near the Oxford City Centre, is a place which says "eat" (according to a letter from one of them).

The secret is a comparatively small daily menu scrawled on a white board which allows Mrs Ows to do no more than she can manage herself, perhaps a gongxi ka rasi, a tender, mahogany coloured braised beef whose thickish, oily sauce is p. plant with cardamom, cloves, cummin and mustard seed, or pork with tamarind and ginger, or roast duck with ginger and wine, or leeks with p. eapple and a sauce of ginger flavoured with turmeric and coconut.

I had their vegetarian dish and sat there slowly and helpfully putting an artichoke to my lips and dipping it in a spicy fresh tomato and onion sauce: it made a nice change from the law library, where I ought to have been instead. Drink can be taken in, but most people settle for one of the various teas kept.

The Nepalese, too, seem to have spread both in London and outside. (Next year, Afghans?) Guide inspectors have recently found the Mander family's Gurkhas Tandoori in Warren Street using a variety of value with engaging "even glossy" dishes distinguish the place from the usual north Indian genre. Even a chicken liver bhutwa and the minced beef, tomato and fresh coriander dish called shak su ka (£1.70) can be found elsewhere in London. But the keema nan was exceptionally light and fragrant and the aloo keran loacher distinctive—a very sour, clinging kind of potato pickle with chick and sesame oil.

"They bring your entire meal surprisingly on a trolley, which saves on service, the food would be better if its arrival was phased."

Hari Karki has gone one better by setting in Aldershot—a quaint development Kipling never envisaged—to give to day's subalterns a taste of what their Indian Army grandfathers might have experienced. Mr Karki, an ex-Gurkha engineer, imported a chef from Katmandu for his Johnnie Gurkhas Nepalese Cuisine, and it is possible here to order a special Nepalese thali (set meal on a tray) that begins with steamed mamocha (dumplings filled with spiced minced pork) followed by the same potato pickle, jedomas lamb curry, and rice and vegetables.

Tori ko gundruk (£1.25) is described as a "typical Sherpa dried vegetable dish". Just how this is distinguished from the freeze-dried flakes that litter accidental youth hostels is not explained, but here too more familiar tandoori tikka and lamb curries, channa (chick peas), nan and samosas are also worth ordering.

Finally, for the growing number of people who find that the west and south Indian vegetarian foods suits their taste as well as it suits their pocket, Croxson now has in Munchy a place just as good as the longer-established north and central London examples. Kari-Tank's cooking delighted not only the Guide's inspector, but a vegetarian Goan who is herself an accomplished cook.

Note the blueprint (60p) of a crunchy, chewy mixed with a hot and sweet dressing, the kachori pastries filled with spiced mung dal and served with a fresh coriander and green chutney, and the de luxe thali (£3.80) which fills you up with a taste of many things.

Drink later at considerably less than central London Indian restaurants charge for these metallic brews, or the juice of mango, passion fruit or sugar cane for a familiar price. Remember too that most Indian and related places serve the yoghurt drink called lassi, which is very soothing if you have swallowed a chili in error.

Details: Rasa Sayang, 10 Frith Street, London, W1. Tel: 01-734 8720. Open noon-midnight (1 am Friday and Saturday). A la carte meal about £4.75. Melati, 31 Peter Street, London, W1. Tel: 01-437 2011. Closed Sunday. Must book dinner. Meals 12-2.30, 6-11.30. Table d'hôte from £5. A la carte meal about £4.05.

The Equatorial, 37 Old Compton Street, W1. Tel: 01-437 6112. Open noon-11 pm. Table d'hôte from £4. A la carte meal about £5.10. Munchy Munchy, 6 Park End Street, Oxford. Tel: 01865 45710. Closed Sunday. Monday lunch. Meals 12-2.10, 5.30-9.10. A la carte meal about £3.05.

Gurkhas Tandoori Restaurant, 23 Warren Street, London, W1. Tel: 01-388 1640. Must book. Meals 12-2.45, 6-11.45. A la carte meal about £4.15. Johnnie Gurkhas, 54 Station Road, Aldershot, Hampshire. Tel: Aldershot (0252) 27736. Meals 12-2.45, 5.30-11.45. Table d'hôte lunch £2.50; table d'hôte dinner £4.50 and £6. A la carte meal about £3.20.

Mumbhave, 305 London Road, Croydon, Surrey. Tel: 01-683 6331. Closed Monday; weekend lunch. Must book dinner. Meals 12-2, 6-11. Table d'hôte lunch £1.75; table d'hôte dinner £4. A la carte meal about £5.30.

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THEATRES

WINDMILL THEATRE OF 01-437 6512
TWO NIGHTS: PAUL RAYMOND presents his new play, "The Accidental Death of an Anarchist". The comic experience of the modern era. 5th March, 7.30 p.m. and 8.15 p.m. Tickets £2.50, £3.50, £4.50, £5.50, £6.50, £7.50, £8.50, £9.50, £10.50, £11.50, £12.50, £13.50, £14.50, £15.50, £16.50, £17.50, £18.50, £19.50, £20.50, £21.50, £22.50, £23.50, £24.50, £25.50, £26.50, £27.50, £28.50, £29.50, £30.50, £31.50, £32.50, £33.50, £34.50, £35.50, £36.50, £37.50, £38.50, £39.50, £40.50, £41.50, £42.50, £43.50, £44.50, £45.50, £46.50, £47.50, £48.50, £49.50, £50.50, £51.50, £52.50, £53.50, £54.50, £55.50, £56.50, £57.50, £58.50, £59.50, £60.50, £61.50, £62.50, £63.50, £64.50, £65.50, £66.50, £67.50, £68.50, £69.50, £70.50, £71.50, £72.50, £73.50, £74.50, £75.50, £76.50, £77.50, £78.50, £79.50, £80.50, £81.50, £82.50, £83.50, £84.50, £85.50, £86.50, £87.50, £88.50, £89.50, £90.50, £91.50, £92.50, £93.50, £94.50, £95.50, £96.50, £97.50, £98.50, £99.50, £100.50, £101.50, £102.50, £103.50, £104.50, £105.50, £106.50, £107.50, £108.50, £109.50, £110.50, £111.50, £112.50, £113.50, £114.50, 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Fred Emery

Backs to the Budgets

Mrs Thatcher last Tuesday nearly voted in favour of a £120 increase in child benefit. Indiscreetly, of course. She swerved instinctively towards the "aye" lobby in the Commons when she spotted four Conservative MPs there, but was sharply headed off when it was realized that they were rebels voting with the Labour Opposition. Coming so soon after the House of Lords defeat for the Government over school transport charges, the Prime Minister was not amused.

The unnerving quality of the incident illustrates the build-up for two budgets—Sir Geoffrey Howe's on Wednesday, and the great row over Britain's EEC budget contribution resuming a few days afterwards in Brussels. Conservatives are faced with distinct dilemmas, no less acute for being different. They do, after all, champion their claim to be the European party as well as the party of the family.

The still simmering backbench revolt over child benefit goes to the heart of the politics involved in administering the dose of nasty medicine due in the Chancellor's Budget. The Government, acknowledging in Sir Keith Joseph's arresting phrase that "we probably lost the first six months" in office coming to grips with its inheritance, seems now bent on spooning down all the tough measures at once.

Several Ministers convey agreement, if foreboding, that there is

little sense at this stage trying to soften the blow—although, in the odd way we run government, no Cabinet member outside the Prime Minister's immediate Treasury team seems to be aware of what the Budget actually contains. They will be "told" at the pre-Budget Cabinet.

Public spending will at last be cut heavily, and the poor and the unemployed will have to take their cuts along with the rest. The long heralded intention to "de-index" most social and supplementary benefits, and to remove the earnings-related element from unemployment benefit, go undented: in plain language it means that payments will be reduced in real terms because they will no longer be kept in line with the increase in prices.

The notion that all this can be contemplated without political relief or counterbalance, implicitly weighing on manifesto commitments, is what has astonished the possibly 50-strong group of Tories committed to increasing child benefit. If Sir Geoffrey announces no more than a 75p increase there will be deep frustration.

This is not simply a question of the "wets" having no stomach for the battle against inflation. A party divide of course exists, with a sizeable element believing that the Government itself is "wet"—witness the recent leading article in *Crossbow* questioning "Has our tough new Tory government failed already?" On the issue of child benefit, an interest-

ing alliance of young liberal-wing Tories with some right-wingers has sprung up. What they need above all, for their own voters, is something to help the medicine go down.

Their commitment to maintaining child benefit at least at its April 1979 £4 value would require next November an increase to at least £5.20; this sounded at times close to an ideology—of beating the "why work?" syndrome. If child benefit is not increased in line with inflation then it will remain that child support will be less for the working family than it is for the unemployed. The argument has been made endlessly by Conservatives.

Some of the campaigners have told me that they live in hope of persuading the Chancellor, even at the eleventh hour; others that they see no hope, and that they will have to vote against the Budget. The Lords here will be of no avail.

My own reckoning is that they have little hope of a change of heart in the Treasury at this stage. The dominant group of economy ministers seems convinced that we must batten down for another tough year before things begin to get better. Did not the Prime Minister trust that we shall be out of the wood in two or three years? In her interview with *Die Welt*? Do not burgeoning North Sea revenues beckon next year?

Indeed there is another, untrumpeted message, that things may already have turned the corner. Again quoting from an extraordinary and

fascinating radio interview in the BBC *Analysis* programme that got little notice during my recent convalescence it was put thus:

"Sir Keith Joseph: ... What is not visible is that all over the country new businesses are coming into existence in new fields."

Mary Goldring: Cross your heart? Sir Keith: Cross my heart; in small numbers, perhaps, but what astonishes and delights me is the evidence that there is business vitality, despite all the discouragement."

Sir Keith went on to hope that the 17 per cent minimum lending rate would be "very temporary"; that public expenditure cuts would lead to a "systematic fall in inflation that will start late this year, and will begin to have fairly significant effects next year ...". Clearly, be but patient awhile.

This theme of holding on until relief comes is not one which particularly helps secure our case at Brussels. There we must insist on equity, and equity now. But many in the Cabinet, and still the majority of Conservatives in the Commons, are appalled at the prospect that they are helping to wreck their political lives trying to gain admission.

The key to a solution, and the one leader our Ministers seem unsure of dealing with, is President Giscard d'Estaing. No one is going to say it publicly beforehand, but his domestic political problems in France are appreciated. And there is some willingness to settle outstanding

issues with him at the same time as Britain's budget problem—provided no crude horse-trading, or trade-off, is suggested.

If, for some reasons best known to himself, President Giscard is determined that Britain shall be offered no more than a derisory sum, then we are in for a very difficult period. The decision that we would then "have to consider" withholding Britain's VAT-related contributions is meant to be taken seriously.

But more likely is the offer of a sum that will test the Government's judgment. Clearly it is not going to be politically acceptable in Britain for Mrs Thatcher to come home with the half a loaf she has already refused. What is acceptable? £200m, £300m, off our net contribution?

The all-party political support Mrs Thatcher is likely to get from the Commons on Monday is also treacherous.

Some in the Labour Party would love to set her up for a failure which could, in Mr Roy Mason's words, be the spark that set off the chain reaction for withdrawal.

The now-or-never approach, so obvious in the run-up to Dublin, is again being ardently pursued by Mrs Thatcher's helpers. Some defusing of expectations in the coming week might be no bad thing, as seems in the cards. It will take another autumn after this one to get the kind of constructive agreement we say we are seeking. Barrels of the budget, domestic or foreign, rarely provide any winners.

Something unique about Aldabra

The Royal Society is trying to raise £500,000 to discharge one of the more curious obligations lingering from the days of Empire: wardenship of the Seychelles atoll of Aldabra.

The atoll, which comprises four main islands and innumerable islets surrounding a shallow lagoon, is a unique example of evolution in isolation and therefore of great scientific interest. Like the better known Galapagos island group off the coast of Ecuador, Aldabra's remoteness and general uselessness to anyone have protected it.

The closest the atoll ever came to being despoiled by man was in 1966, when plans to build a base for the White Mooted; scientists and conservationists reacted noisily and the plans were defeated. In the process Mr Tam Dalyell set a record of sorts by raising more than 50 questions on the matter in the Commons and recruiting others to continue the barrage even after the Speaker had ruled him *hors de combat* on that particular subject.

It remains an open question whether the campaigners or devaluation in 1967 finally put paid to plans for Aldabra's development.

In those days Aldabra was part of the British Indian Ocean Territory, and the British connexion has persisted. The Royal Society made haste to open a research programme as soon as it perceived the threat to the area and has been there ever since as lessee, first from the BIOT and since independence in 1976 from the Republic of the Seychelles. "Under the Royal Society's wardenship," says the fund-raising brochure, "some 100 scientists from seven countries have put in 50 man-years of research."

The Seychellois have set up a public trust to take over the management of the Aldabra programme from March 31. Money raised by the Royal Society and a number of other scientific and conservation agencies including the World Wildlife Fund and the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, is to be invested to meet annual running costs estimated at £50,000.

Mr David Griffin, secretary of the Aldabra Research Committee, says the Prince of Wales has given some money, though the Royal Society is not at liberty to say how much. Other individuals approached include the singer Olivia Newton-John, who said she had already given to help save the seals in the Wash, and former Beagle Paul McCartney, who was in a Tokyo jail at the time. Aldabra is 260 miles north-

west of Madagascar, the nearest mainland, and is singularly lacking in the kinds of things—soil, fresh water, safe anchorages—that man finds attractive in islands.

The atoll is about twenty-one miles long and nine miles wide. Its lagoon, sixteen by five miles, is one of the world's largest. Aldabra is a place of natural type, inevitably develop as important breeding grounds; where sub-species have evolved, or significant numbers of otherwise scarce creatures have found refuge, their importance is immeasurable.

Birds unique to Aldabra include sub-species of the sacred ibis, of the white-throated rail, which on Aldabra alone is flightless, and of the Madagascar kestrel, an improbably tiny bird of prey and possibly the smallest raptor in the world.

Sea turtles used to be abundant in the waters around Aldabra, which is still an important nesting area, and there is some indication that numbers may be on the increase despite the difficulties of enforcing anti-poaching legislation, however strict. But the animal for which Aldabra is best known, among those who have heard of it at all, is the giant Indian Ocean tortoise, of which there are an incredible 150,000 or more.

"Aldabra's ecosystem is the only one in the world today where the dominant herbivore is a reptile," says the Royal Society's brochure. And what a reptile—a lumbering monster weighing as much as 600lb and more than six feet long. Their longevity is, of course, legendary: scientists have named Napoleon and Captain Cook as acquaintances of giant tortoises that have lived well past the middle of this century.

It is hardly surprising that in their study of the creatures the scientists tend to take the long view. In a volume of *The Terrestrial Ecology of Aldabra* taken from the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* and published separately in 1979, a team from the Oxford University zoology department writes: "Fossil evidence suggests that Aldabra has been inundated and subsequently recolonized by giant tortoises three or four times in the last 170,000 years..."

The authors go on, at some recalcitrant length, to raise the image of hosts of floating tortoises surviving as amphibians while some wretched reptilian Prime Mover rained down a series of Great Floods through the millennia.

Tony Samstag



Detail from a Byzantine icon of St. Parasceve, painted about 1300.

A positively Byzantine affair in Birmingham

Have you ever worried about Pachomios and the idea of sanctity? Put it another way: what are your feelings about the deservedly unpublished life of St. Eirene, the Empress? If such questions tickle your curiosity, this is the weekend for answering them. The Centre for Byzantine Studies at Birmingham University is holding its annual symposium for scholars from all over the world.

This year the theme is the Byzantine Saint. The 38 speakers from a dozen countries include for the first time a distinguished Soviet art historian and two Bollandists—members of a small and almost legendary community of Jesuit scholars in Belgium which has been devoted for more than three centuries to editing the *Lives of the Saints* (*Acta Sanctorum*).

The Bollandists began by publishing the *Saints for January* in 1643. By 1940 they had reached *Saints for December*. There are cautious hopes

that they will reach the *Saints for December* 31, and so climb their holy Everest, by the end of the century.

There will be papers on the pre-Christian and oriental origins of the Holy Man (and Women); his hagiography (auto-hagiography and anti-hagiography); the Saint as a social, political, and economic phenomenon; the art, cult, relics, and celebration of the Wonderworking Saint; and the remarkable variety of the Byzantine Saint, from the Forty Martyrs to the Holy Fool.

Old Byzantine hands will be surprised if the ingenious director, Professor Anthony Bryer, does not provide some *comp de theatre* in addition to the grueling course of papers. They

remember with alarm the demonstration of Greek Fire, the re-enactment of the Coronation Ceremony of the Fourteen Beds, and the loss of pictures from the Queen's collection at Windsor.

One year there was the authentic Serbian *guslar*, who did not turn up; another the player of the Pontic lyre, who did, an aged figure in baggy blue national costume who accompanied proceedings on his primitive, one-stringed fiddle.

This is the weekend that Byzantinists gather from around the world to examine our roots to our golden past, and to glory in a lively new *emphases* in international scholarship in Birmingham.

Philip Howard

Lords of the desert, seeking the simple life

Letter from the Gulf

General de Gaulle, a colleague remarked on the flight out, had once said on his way to the Middle East: "I am setting off for the complicated Orient with a few simple ideas." Six days of hopping from one Gulf country to another in the press retinue of President Giscard d'Estaing gives one a pretty impression of international airports and of large American-style caravansaries; of the difference between "dry" and "semi-dry" and "wet" emirates; and of the fantastic new wealth which has flown from oil, with a little bit of folklore thrown in.

This hardly provides the key to the complicated Orient. But it does lead to a few simple—if not simplistic—observations: the first that for the people of the Arabian peninsula, Jerusalem is much nearer, psychologically at least, than Kabul; and that Israel is a much greater destabilizing factor than Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The second is that Islam has enabled them to pass in a bewilderingly short time from dire poverty to great riches without losing their soul.

The contrast with most black African potentates is startling. The emirs are lords of the desert. They do not forget their nomadic origins. Their personal habits have remained simple, almost austere. One of them, I was told, drives around in a Cadillac (everything is relative) which is two years old, they have remained close to their people, and the feudal structures of government have, as a result, withstood the shock of violent change.

At regular intervals, they hold a *majlis* or assembly, at which anyone with a grievance or a problem can approach the ruler. Some ministers, it is said, sometimes join the line of petitioners to get a quick decision and cut through the red tape.

I had been puzzled as we flew into Kuwait by little clusters of castles dotted about the desert, sometimes around a tent or two. The explanation came later. Although the Kuwaitis, Bahrainis, Qataris and others live in modern (and often model) houses of concrete and steel, and work in huge, characterless city skyscrapers little different from those in the West, the desert

remains an intimate part of their soul; and they work off their nostalgia for it by driving out into it, in families, during the school holidays, to live the old simple life for a few days.

The emirs have taken to heart the lesson of Iran and try to ensure that their people do not become cut off from their roots or lose their identity through breakneck industrialization. They want to husband their resources against the time when their oil runs out and are already thinking of alternative forms of energy, including nuclear; and they are becoming acutely aware of environmental problems.

A Qatar, for instance, an industrial zone is going up 30 miles from the capital in the middle of the desert. In Abu Dhabi trees have been planted in many of the broad avenues, kept alive by expensive watering.

The picture may seem excessively idyllic. Even now, when the first phase of what one

might call the oil rush is over, especially after the sharp increase in prices from 1973 on, mistakes continue to be made. A second international airport, the size of Heathrow, is about to be opened at Abu Dhabi, although there are several already in a relatively small area, and the stadium to seat 70,000—which is just about the size of the native population. There are stories of ultra-modern hotels being put up which remain half empty for lack of clients.

But on the whole, the emirs appear to be wise and level-headed men who have escaped the temptations of *Folie des grandeurs*, although they could afford them, and of power politics. They would rather, as one British ambassador told me, put their money in roads, schools, housing, and sewage than in armed forces.

The influence of the old protecting power, which once reigned supreme in the Gulf, is still strong—but more perceptible in some emirates than in

others. Kuwait struck me as together as most American, including the cars, although 44 Rolls-Royces were sold there last year, and the embassy on the sea-front—"neo-Luxemburg", the ambassador called it—remains a fortress of Englishness. At Bahrain, on the other hand, the food and the service struck me as unmistakably British; at Qatar, the military continue to live up to the Sandhurst tradition and at Abu Dhabi the head of the royal guard is a British colonel.

These are only symbols, when it comes to bricks and mortar—that is to say, trade—pro-British sentiment is not enough to preserve the near-monopoly position British industry or business once had. They must now compete on equal terms with Japan, the United States, Germany and France.

As far as motor cars are concerned they have conspicuously failed to do so. In one emirate the British ambassador had to authorize his staff to buy Japanese or American cars because there are no spare parts or after-sales service for British cars.

Charles Hargrove

A matter of life and death

The way inflation has hit maternity and death grants...

In 1969 twelve superfine nappies from Mothercare cost 55s (£2.75). Today they are £11.60. A set of six plastic baby pants were half a crown (12p) and are now 85p. The cot which cost £7.50 in 1969 is now £48.75. Maternity grant, which is intended to help parents meet the costs associated with child birth, was increased to £25 in 1969. It is still £25 today.

In 1969, in fact, the grant was sufficient to equip a family for the new arrival. It would buy nappies, pants, carrycot and transporter, an adjustable cot, cot blankets, a baby bath and stretch towelling baby suits (total bill £22.90).

The cost of the same items today has risen to £114.20 and the maternity grant would not even buy baby's carrycot and single blanket (£26.50).

At the other end of life inflation has eroded the value of state grants even more drastically. In 1949, when it was introduced, the £20 death grant was sufficient to cover the cost of a decent burial. It has been raised twice since, in 1956 and 1967, but by the latter date, when it reached its present level of £30, it was reckoned to meet only half the cost of a basic funeral.

To raise maternity from £25 to £85, restor value in terms of the price index, though not own index of prices paid related to baby products, cost approximately £50. Raising death grant to which would theoretically store the value it had in 1949 would cost £30 million.

If Sir Geoffrey wish strike a blow at the leg hard-heartedness of Treasury, and spare a live mite for human life, he must also consider the vast dropping the age limit imposed on eligibility for grants. Men born before 1883, and women born July, 1883, do not qualify. Those born in the 10th decade qualify for only 10 grants.

In the nature of things are few of these old people alive, but many of those survive are among the poorest in the community. The fit of an adequate death would be belated, but still comfort at the end of life.

Robin Ye
Consumer
Correspondent

Among the many doubtless apocryphal tales of Manchester City Football Club's spending habits is one concerning their talent spotter who was sent to watch a young player at a Fourth Division club and sent back a report saying: "He was not better than the rest." The reply was said to be: "Buy them all."

City have attracted such stories by arriving at today's 100th derby match with Manchester United in danger of relegation to the Second Division after spending well over £4m on players in less than 15 months.

Red account

Manchester City appear to have thrown good money after bad, and that adage may find support on the terraces, but in purely financial terms they have only recently come out of intense transfer activity with a red account. Until the signing this month of Reeves from Norwich City for £2,500,000, the deal was undertaken by Malcolm Allison, since he returned to the club in January 1979 showed that he had sold nine players for £2,625,000 and bought nine for £3,246,000. The deficit, on unofficial figures, was £621,000, or the price of a moderately promising Second Division player.

Such is the outward absurdity of the transfer market that City seem to have contributed to the spiral by making that last remark into one of the more disturbing facts of football life. They paid £756,000 for one Mick Robinson who came into the category of a moderately promising young Second Division forward for whom Mr Allison's first offer was reported to be £350,000. The aura £406,000 was described by the general manager, Tony Book, as "just backing your own judgement."

While upholders of the transfer system maintain that the money remains in football, and certainly a large proportion of the deals involve previous unfinished business between the clubs concerned, the rate at which Manchester City have bought and sold since Mr Allison's arrival has been out of the ordinary.

The reasons for this financially astounding activity that has seen numerous team changes and such bizarre features as a second XI valued at nearly £2m and some desperate cup runs against clubs who hardly knew where their next match ball was coming from, may not be far from the centre circle of today's local derby at Old Trafford.

good times, and City some excellent team recently as two seasons club has been exactly the cult that is M United.

The curious situation is that a chairmanship of Peter Manchester City have worked harder at getting on than any other club. Mr Swales, a successful man who went into his work at Man, he did into his radio-division businesses. He is a full-time adm also serving as a Football association councillor, and several interest shows he seems to have a Press that, and necessarily critical, often baffling activity. City is in itself an intent.

Mr Swales is somewhat of a "what's going on?" and there rumours of Mr Allison departure. It was Mr promotion to team in 1972 and the later dep the gentle manager, Joe that caused much up the boardroom, and of Mr Swales emerged man in 1973.

The decision to a flamboyant Mr Allison direct the club, after out of the spotlight, so palpably enjoys, as about City's consummation to be considered a trial club in the way the are always described.

Large cig

Mr Allison was going to get the best fit of the club's new players, who were transferred, but if City that Mr Allison's large check suits, large character would quite sage the quiet, solemn, coated in black. Some of them were worn.

Today finds United to top of the First Division City fourth from bottom Liverpool, who lead by six points, have not an expensive player, months, Liverpool occur buy replacement parts by replacement parts by Chester City try to tal the factory. Meanwhile Sexton modestly and tirelessly successfully the middle course, to the annoyance of all at Man, the very slight irrita those at Anfield.

Normal



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ATKINS KEEPS ON TRYING

Mr. Stormont's conference its penultimate session before adjourning until noon. The expectations are held of it before it have been fulfilled, which that an agreed form of government for Northern Ireland is still out of the conference, from the largest party in the Ulster Unionists, itself, has covered a round without actually to grief, and that says for the diplomatic Secretary of State, argument at its heart is resolution then when first sat down, the by the political representation of the nationalist (Roman) minority that they be in government and of the unionist (Protestant) majority, to counter such arrangement. Even could be agreed or judged black would remain in the shadow of the "new" text stage is for Mr. to consult his colleagues in forward proposals. It is Parliament's turn to say, and the Ulster party will have to be in. That party, which is presented in the Commission as one of its objects, Mr. Atkins's conference that the only proper or discussion of that at that stage was the Commons. There might be something to be adopting the unusual

device of a parliamentary commission to examine the Government's proposals. The membership of a commission, unlike that of a select committee, need not be confined to members of Parliament; so the Northern Ireland parties which are not represented at Westminster could be brought in. This would not only have the advantage of bringing the argument into a different forum, when there is nothing more to be said, try saying it all over again in new surroundings. It would also admit, not before time English, Scottish and Welsh "dimensions".

Whatever the arrangements precisely, Mr. Atkins is seeing to it that there is a full programme of talking ahead for all concerned. Talk however cannot conceal, and has doubtful power to alter, the facts of Ulster politics. The fact most relevant to present discussions is that the province of Northern Ireland contains a sizable minority which, in the only kind of effective parliamentary politics, it throws up, has its magnetic pole outside the province and the state, for reasons which are historical, religious and cultural in origin.

This fact accounts for the minority's politicians never winning power by election except in whatever administrative districts there are which preponderance its demographic preponderance. In most administrative districts and over the province as a whole they are permanently excluded from government. The same fact accounts for unionist

politicians' refusal to "share power" with them. Why, they ask, should one be expected to join in government with men whose highest ambition is to bring the place under another sovereignty? Such unnatural coalition may be suitable, if at all, for a state of transition; but they do not regard, or wish to admit, the status of Northern Ireland as transitional (whatever the Act of 1920 or King George V may have said).

When unionist politicians entered into a "power sharing" arrangement in 1974 they were under far greater pressure than they are now, and the ship was quickly wrecked. That experience has left the minority's representatives more than ever determined to accept no less, and the majority's representatives disinclined ever to play that game again. Neither the IRA's blunders, nor Westminster's blunders, nor Mr. Haughey's acquisitive diplomacy changes any of that. That is why administration of the province by a local civil service and imported ministers remains the least bad arrangement available. To the extent of its power, it is for anyone with local political ambitions. Ways could be sought of mitigating the starkness of direct rule and fattening up the province's meagre local government. Nor is Mr. Atkins wrong to pursue his more ambitious agenda, in the hope of proving this estimate of the possibilities wrong, and of inducing Ulster's distrustful politicians to acquiesce in something they do not agree with.

Changes in divorce law

From Mr. R. M. Powell

Sir, I must take strong issue with Lady Harris and Mrs. Hilary Halpin about the unverified suppositions contained in their letter (March 8). In one contradictory sentence they claim that "the recent divorce reforms, whilst undoubtedly necessary to remedy the previous unsatisfactory state of affairs, have created a complex and confusing situation". Firstly, the Divorce Reform Act, 1969, and the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1973, can hardly be called recent and whilst the state of affairs is even more unsatisfactory it can reasonably be said to be straightforward and crystal clear. Ask any jury indeed many ex-wives may be delighted to find that despite their contribution to the break-up of the marriage their ex-husbands must continue to support them for life with one-third of their gross salary. So, unlike these ex-wives there are thousands of men who have lost their homes, deprived of their children and forced to pay a legal stranger, who are bitter at the insult piled upon injury.

Non-fault law will never be understood or readily agreed to by fair-minded people whilst an ex-husband and his new wife have their standard of living severely and summarily reduced by regular payments to an ex-wife who was fully or partly guilty of causing the dissolution of the marriage. The non-fault law could only be acceptable and equitable when a childless marriage is ended by the clear and final break to which so much lip service has been paid. Eternal maintenance makes a tragical mockery of our divorce legislation. To the extent of its power, it is for anyone with local political ambitions. Ways could be sought of mitigating the starkness of direct rule and fattening up the province's meagre local government. Nor is Mr. Atkins wrong to pursue his more ambitious agenda, in the hope of proving this estimate of the possibilities wrong, and of inducing Ulster's distrustful politicians to acquiesce in something they do not agree with.

Averting the perils of nuclear warfare

From Mr. Tom McKitterick

Sir, May I take a stage further Professor Farmer's letter of March 15? There is indeed a frightening tendency to talk of the next war as though it is likely to happen, and to prepare our minds for it. The Radio Times, announcing the Radio 4 programme Target UK on March 16, wrote a third World War is possible during the next eighteen months. This unthinkable has become thinkable, and it was small comfort to be told in the programme that the forthcoming Government publication Protect and Survive recommends action which might reduce the number of dead in this country from perhaps 40 million to only 15 million. The experts who participated were, understandably, vague about what the survivors would survive to.

Nato, we were told, spends more on arms than do the Warsaw Pact countries, and at a time when nearly all else is being cut back we are increasing that expenditure. We have been spending vast sums for 30 years, and so have the Russians; have they brought us security? True, there has been no war between the Great Powers. But that is because neither side was willing to disturb the balance of terror and both recognised that the point of "unacceptable damage" had long been passed. So, however painfully and distastefully, we progressed for the cold war to détente, and the world breathed a little more easily. Now the balance has been disturbed, and the biggest single disturbing factor is—and one must say it—the western rapprochement with China, which one well-known foreign correspondent has written with wider détente, but which now the Russians are bound to regard as a threat. In the BBC programme, we again heard American generals using the words "containment" and "rollback" in the way John Foster Dulles once used them.

The Brandt report drew attention to the immense disparity between spending on arms and spending on the aid and investment which could help to create genuine stability. Most people welcomed the report. It appears to be powerless in the face of such events as we have seen in Iran and Afghanistan. 2. A fact of supreme importance is that in our time there is in existence a world-wide spiritual community, which transcends race, colour, nation and all the divisive political ideologies. It is surely the most potent force making for peace and justice and the brotherhood of mankind. Could not the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Runcie, call a religious summit meeting of the top spiritual leaders in the world to seek God's guidance in this dangerous situation and give the ordinary Christian minister and lay person a lead?

I am quite well aware that to say that sounds like a plea for appeasement, but it is not; the argument cuts both ways. It is a plea that both sides should look hard at their policies and behaviour, should recognise the fears of the other, and should genuinely try to re-establish the atmosphere of détente. To do so will not be easy, it will involve an immense amount of soul-searching,

rethinking of attitudes and priorities in expenditure, and it will be particularly difficult in an election year in the United States and when we have a Prime Minister with an Iron Lady reputation to keep up. But if we do not do it, we may well be facing our own destruction—a thought which reminds me irresistibly of Ezra Pound's epigram: When I consider the curious habits of dogs, I am obliged to conclude That man is the superior animal. When I carefully consider the curious habits of men, I confess, my friend, I am puzzled. Yours faithfully, T. E. M. MCKITTERICK, 142 Avelands, Dartford, Kent, March 18.

From the Reverend Allan J. Bowers
Sir, For long enough I have been searching in the section "Letters to the Editor" for a letter such as appeared in today's issue (March 15) from Professor F. T. Farmer on "Perils of nuclear warfare". It was a brave letter and I am sure that many readers will agree with all he has written. Our hearts almost fail us for fear when we think of the size of the nuclear arsenal. The combined nuclear arsenals of America and Russia would provide 15 tons of explosive power for every human being. If nuclear war on a world scale broke loose, millions would be annihilated. And in such a war there could be no victor nor could there be, however righteous, win. As Professor Farmer says, "War has indeed become bankrupt, obsolete." I would add two further points to Professor Farmer's letter:—

1. The urgent need for our time is for a workable international law administered by a world authority which will not be defeated at every crisis by individual nations claiming to be judges in their own cause. At the present time the United Nations, splendid organization that it is, appears to be powerless in the face of such events as we have seen in Iran and Afghanistan. 2. A fact of supreme importance is that in our time there is in existence a world-wide spiritual community, which transcends race, colour, nation and all the divisive political ideologies. It is surely the most potent force making for peace and justice and the brotherhood of mankind. Could not the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Runcie, call a religious summit meeting of the top spiritual leaders in the world to seek God's guidance in this dangerous situation and give the ordinary Christian minister and lay person a lead? Yours sincerely, ALLAN J. BOWERS, The Methodist Church, Wolverhampton Trinity Circuit, Trinity House, Hixon, Hill, Codsall, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, March 15.

Emergency planning

From Mr. J. Denis Brown

Sir, As chief executive of a large but sparsely populated district in Cumbria (and therefore controller-designate in the event of war), I have obvious follow-up to a great deal of interest in the various articles and correspondence on emergency planning. The councils mentioned in your last report are by no means the only ones who have taken active and responsible interest in this business. Here in what might be regarded as a remote part of the country, this district council, with the considerable assistance of the Cumbria County Council, began a series of training courses for community advisers as far back as last year. We have 200 people entirely voluntarily giving up their time to attend training sessions organised on the basis of seven groups.

These community advisers were nominated by the parish councils who were asked to put forward the names of people who would be "accepted by and respected by" the local communities should there be a war. We will continue, after

these 200 have been trained, with further courses in the hope that before any war does arise there will be a small core of people in every village and hamlet who will have sufficient knowledge of the likely effects of war and of what can be done in preparation for it. I am sure more importantly, of what can be done to survive and recover after the attack is over.

We place enormous reliance upon the parish councils in our planning for this dreadful eventuality. As your article on electromagnetic pulse pointed out, communications may well be disrupted and the immediate responsibility for control and command will almost inevitably fall at parish level.

I believe that with the right sort of peacetime preparation they not only can but will carry out their task to the enormous benefit of the nation.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully, J. DENIS BROWN, Eden District Council, Town Hall, Penrith, Cumbria, March 5.

Teaching and scholarship

From Professor Sir Brian Pippard, FRS

Sir, Dr. Denis Dooley (March 15) quotes Cardinal Newman's view that teachers and scholars are different beings, but I wonder if he has ever investigated whether what may have been true in the last century of a small elite still applies in modern universities. Of course, there are dedicated scholars and research workers who have been denied the talent to communicate, as there are (I suppose) a few outstanding teachers with no urge to create new learning or re-evaluate the old; but these are a minority, to be respected but not held up as models. A superficial analysis of a few physics departments carried out not many years ago indicated a strong correlation between success in teaching and in research, which I believe a proper survey would confirm. Most of us are neither great teachers nor great scholars, and in view of the modern tendency to regard research as a higher voca-

tion than teaching, it can only be harmful to foster the idea that we have to choose one or the other.

There are different ways of advancing understanding—by research, by critical analysis, by consulting practice among others—and it is activities like these that allow us to teach with an immediacy that few can acquire from books alone. In my own subject and in this country it is rare to find any staff member believing that his talent for research should exempt him from teaching duties; indeed the reverse is more commonly true, that it is the best young researchers whose energy and enthusiasm bring new vitality to the teaching programme. I hope it is also true in other fields and will remain so, for this is the way in which a modern university fulfils its high purpose. Yours faithfully, BRIAN PIPPARD, Cavendish Laboratory, Madingley Road, Cambridge, March 17.

Labour on the GLC

From the Leader of the Opposition, Greater London Council

Sir, As my name is mentioned today (March 18) by your Political Correspondent in his article headed "Labour group says Marxist in line to lead GLC", I hope you will allow me the opportunity briefly to comment. My own future role is of little importance. But the assumption of the Social Democratic Alliance that the constituency of Labour is the recent conference of the London Labour Party will be endorsed by the Annual Conference of the Labour Party is very questionable. If the assumption is correct then the Conference will in future elect the Leader of the Labour Group on the GLC. But there can be little

doubt that the predominant issue in the GLC election in 1981 will not be internal party affairs but will be the reliability and cost of London Transport. The policy likely to be advocated by the so-called left wing is fares-free London Transport. I do not believe such a policy would secure the support of the trade unions whose votes are all important in the London Labour Party Conference. Nor do I believe that any political party advocating such an impractical or inequitable policy would secure control of the GLC. These issues are more important than the speculation about personalities. Yours truly, REG GOODWIN, Room 133, The County Hall, SE1, March 19.

Delayed decisions on arts grants

From Professor Philip Collins

Sir, The Arts Council grant for 1980-81 announced yesterday by Mr. Norman St. John-Stevens might have been worse, might have been better—I shall not argue about that, but it certainly might, with advantage, have been made earlier. Government, in recent years, has been announcing its grant to the arts later and later in the previous financial year. We have now reached an absurd degree of brinkmanship when it is only a fortnight before the financial year begins, that the Arts Council hears, officially, what its grant will be. Inevitably there is then some delay before the Arts Council can tell its many clients what their allocation will be.

To give a local instance of what is occurring in many other places: yesterday, so it happened, the Board of Directors of the Leicester Theatre Trust had its regular meeting. We had had to announce, last October, our programme through to our summer closure in June. This included a cautious and relatively cheap programme for the month, April to June, which in the known financial year. So far, so good. But our Management yesterday could not make any post-June proposals to the Board, because the Arts Council grant was not known, and our main local authority grant will not be finalised until that authority discovers how much money we shall receive from the Arts Council.

This is inefficient, not merely inconvenient. In effect, the financial year has already begun before managements can devise their budget for that year: for grants now constitute half or more of such theatres' income, so until that major component is known, realistic budgeting cannot begin (though of course one plays around in advance with a series of alternative budgets, assuming various levels of grant). Thus, yesterday, our Management did not know whether we could afford a big summer musical, nor when we should with optimum financial prospects reopen our theatre after its summer closure, nor what the shape and scale of our autumn-winter programme can be. In many areas of theatrical operation, decisions become more expensive, the later they are taken. Moreover, our not knowing what scale of operation will be possible after early June means that we cannot indicate to staff and company what employment, if any, they can expect in the quite near future, and this is hard on them, nor can we contract other artists, reasonably in advance, before we know what programme we can afford to mount.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that means will soon be found to revert to the practice obtaining a few years ago, when Arts Council clients could hear what the next grant would be, early enough for regional forward planning to be possible.

Yours, PHILIP COLLINS, Secretary, Leicester Theatre Trust Ltd, Haymarket Theatre, Belgrave Gate, Leicester, March 18.

Concord and cordiality

From Mr. Paul Hawkins, MP for Norfolk, South-West (Conservative)

Sir, Your article "Veterans of St. Cyr recall days when entente was cordial" (March 20) prompts me to mention visits made last week to French defence establishments and factories in Aquitaine by a Committee of Western European Union.

We came away with the firm conviction that the entente is still extremely cordial. From Admiral René Bloch, a great admirer of Britain, to the managers and others working in the factories and local politicians, the real desire to cooperate and be friends with Britain was self-evident.

Perhaps this is more obvious in a region which gave Henry II a bride, which in one area refers to a cow not as a vache but as a cow, and where many of the village's soldiers settled after the Spanish campaign.

I am glad to say this was reciprocated when the Queen last year knighted Sir Joseph Szydlowski, head of Turbomeca near Pau, for outstanding cooperation with Rolls-Royce over many years.

Yours truly, PAUL HAWKINS, House of Commons, March 20.

Trains of thought

From Sir Andrew Stark

Sir, I much enjoyed Michael Binyon's "Railway Diary" yesterday (February 29) and his successful evocation of the essentially fervent atmosphere of Anna Karenina's first meeting with Vronsky and the climax of the tragedy. Only the steam, as his acknowledgements, is missing.

But I am curious about his suggestion that in the early post-war years the coaches of the crack "Red Arrow" (Moscow-Leningrad) came from Hitler's private train. For a few days immediately after VE Day in 1945, I shared in the introduction of senior officers of the German High Command (OKW) at Sankt Petersburg near Zell-am-Rhein. These sessions took place in a railway siding in the conference rooms of Hitler's train. "At least when I asked them that what I was told." I find it hard to imagine that the US 7th Army, in whose area the train then was, would have handed this trophy over to the Russians at some later date. I should have expected the coaches rather to have formed the train used by General Eisenhower and his successors for journeys in the US Zone of Germany.

Perhaps Hitler had several private trains, or a spare set of coaches for use on the wider Russian gauge? Can Michael Binyon or any of your readers enlighten me? Yours faithfully, ANDREW STARK, Farnbridge Hall, White Notley, Wilham, Essex, March 1.

ATTER OF VERIFICATION

logical Weapons Convention came into force five years ago, was deservedly well-served by the first unequivocal of disarmament—to abolish an entire of weapons from the military arsenals. Some have become full of it while 34 others have signed the convention, or stockpile bacteriological weapons and to any which already exist. A review conference of the convention has ended in by expressing general on with the way in machinery of the convention worked. Celebrations have been muted how he row between Moscow and London over the alleged of anthrax in the city of Moscow. This has caused, can reports suggest, by "from some germ war-bombing nearby? Or as the Soviet Union natural outbreak follow-mishandling of food? Or is that there is no

satisfactory means of making sure.

There have been calls in Geneva during the past three weeks of the review conference for a better machinery for dealing with complaints of violation. At present these have to be placed before the United Nations Security Council and countries which are party to the convention are pledged to cooperate in any resulting inquiry. It has been pointed out that permanent members of the Security Council could veto such an inquiry before it began. Soviet block delegates in Geneva are reported however to have opposed any change in this procedure.

The Sverdlovsk affair is not the first report of Soviet violation of the convention. This is not to say that previous, less specific charges which have appeared in the western press, have been well-founded. They have certainly been vigorously denied by the Russians. Two years ago Moscow accused the United States of fomenting such rumours to pressurise western allies into accepting the neutron bomb. Tass has now issued a not

dissimilar counter-claim against the United States in the wake of the Sverdlovsk incident.

Perhaps Soviet indignation is justified, but in the absence of any hard evidence either way suspicions are bound to linger, which could in time invalidate the spirit of trust and international confidence that the convention was supposed to foster. But if so they have only themselves to blame for refusing to accept the principle of international on-site verification of a country's compliance with the treaty's provisions.

Admittedly, not even on-site inspection could offer a 100 per cent guarantee that a nation is complying with a convention whose terms are so easy to transgress. Bacteriological weapons remain an uncertain means of conducting warfare, being as they are so heavily dependent upon climatic conditions. But they are also easily produced, and easily hidden. Regular inspection by international arbiters acting within the framework of the UN, could however go a long way to removing anxiety and distrust.

Flowers Report economies

From Dr. A. P. Millar

Sir, When my wife and I were students, our medical school and hospital were run on a reduced general and two lady secretaries. Under the NHS the general was replaced by an army.

Experience shows that administrators will not prune their own numbers to effect economies, and they are the people who decide what financial cuts are to be made. Instead they close hospital beds, hospital wards and even hospitals. In 1970 the average number of NHS beds in England was 423,621. In 1978 (the latest figure available) the number was 369,235.

A hospital bed is an essential unit in the hospital service. There are other less essential parts in a hospital, not connected with the patients' actual treatment, which can be cut back without harm, before resorting to the disastrous step of closing a hospital bed.

A directive should be issued by the Minister, specifically stating the areas where cuts should be made in the hospital service. If this is not done, we will remain saddled with a costly administrative structure controlling fewer and fewer hospitals. Yours faithfully, ANDREW MILLAR, Hethersett, Benson, Oxford.

Priorities in BBC cuts

From Mr. D. A. Hearn and Mr. R. M. Powell

Sir, The cuts in the BBC's orchestras, on which public debate is concentrated, form only part of much wider cuts proposed by the Corporation. The worst hit areas are regional radio and radio, which will disappear altogether. The regional television stations will lose one of their two weekly opt-out programmes. Output from the existing local radio stations will be reduced to ten hours a day. Schools broadcasting in Scotland will disappear and will be cut in England in both television and radio.

The BBC's strategy is to concentrate resources on its network television and radio services from London. It seems prepared to allow its non-metropolitan roots to wither and cut back on its educational and cultural activity. This is a betrayal of its charter obligations.

A healthy broadcasting industry requires a healthy BBC. British broadcasting should not be placed on a predominantly commercial basis. The bias in the present dual system of broadcasting is in favour of TV and radio, resources for the public to the commercial area of broadcasting cannot be justified on grounds of efficiency or of programme quality.

It is not hyperbole to say that the whole future of the BBC has been put at risk for the sake of a pence a day—the difference of £34 between the colour licence of £40 granted by the Government and that of £40-241 requested by the BBC. Yours faithfully, D. A. HEARN, General Secretary, Association of Broadcasting and Allied Staffs, K. ASHTON, General Secretary, National Union of Journalists, 215 Goshope Street, W1, March 20.

RIARCHATE WANTED

ohn Paul meets the of the Ukrainian Catholic in Rome on Monday. It is second time he has seen a special synod of a hierarchy. The first is when he called the bishops together last that was seen as a test of the to post-conciliarism in the Roman Catholic Church. The Ukrainian synod will be a test of his with the Soviet Union. Ukrainian Catholic Church at church of the Bishops but in communion with Having been liquidated in Russia, by the of the second world war risked only in those regions of the Ukraine did not form part of the Union. In 1946 soon after annexation of those a synod of its clergy, id to fierce intimidation, d the church; and 2,700 containing some three million parishioners, into the Russian Orthodox. Not all conformed. The an Catholic Church has need a secret existence in the Soviet Union, although its members are now dis-

ing kind. Its members complain that their church has not always had the support and encouragement from the Vatican which they feel entitled to. Pope Paul VI was cautious. The Soviet authorities claim that the Ukrainian Catholic Church is simply a church in exile. The ex-patriate Ukrainians claim, correctly, that their church has a definite representation within the Soviet Union, though a secret one. Pope Paul did nothing to contradict the Soviet claim. In particular he refrained from conferring the title of patriarch on the aged Cardinal Slipi, the spiritual head of that church and a national hero to exiled Ukrainians. He spent 18 years in Soviet prisons before his release in 1963. So important is the matter of the patriarchate to Ukrainian Catholics that they have taken, without authority, to using some of the courtesies of the title, and even the title itself, of Cardinal Slipi.

The title of patriarch is important because it implies territorial jurisdiction; it is therefore appropriate if applied to the head of a church based and active in the Ukraine (the exiles' claim) and inappropriate if applied to the head of a church which has been scattered (the Soviet claim). The Vatican has also been cautious in as much as it

has not, so far as is known, brought the Ukrainian question on to the agenda of its periodical discussions with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Will the present Pope be bolder, will he urge the members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church their desire and confer that pregnant title on Cardinal Slipi or his successor? Their church is tolerated within the Polish state, though the Poles are not traditionally sympathetic to the Eastern rites. More to the point, Pope John Paul has been more open and more active than his predecessor in support of the Lithuanians who furnish the chief manifestation of open Roman Catholicism within the Soviet Union. It might be thought true to his character for him to make that solemn gesture of encouragement to the Ukrainians, whom history and their communist masters have so cruelly abused this century; and it would be good to see them so rewarded. But the gesture, because of the jurisdictional implication of the title of patriarch, would be sharply resented by the Soviet authorities, including those of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Vatican has not only its own relations with the East to consider, but also the risk of intensified persecution of the Ukrainian Catholics still there.

e of fisheries

James Johnson, MP for Hull, West (Labour)

leader and Mr. Kershaw's (March 13) both show the effect that Government over the years has had on p-sea fishing industry. 1977, the South Atlantic Committee has been pres- Government support for a fishery survey in the Atlantic, to ascertain the as for our distant-water fish- in that area. The Fish Authority's desk study potential of the South Atlantic was undertaken after the in 1976 of Lord Shackleton's Survey of the Falklands. The survey indicated yield of blue whiting alone offshore waters of the d Islands and, Surveid night be equivalent to the of cods in fish in the United

agree to underwrite the costs of an expedition during the Antarctic summer of 1980-81. Time is running out for our deep-sea fishermen, and if Government delays mean that yet another year is lost, the trawlers that could be fishing British waters in the South Atlantic might end up on the scrap heap instead.

Yours faithfully, JAMES JOHNSON, Chairman, South Atlantic Fisheries Committee, Falkland Islands Research and Development Association, 2 Greycoat Place, Westminster, SW1.

Right to resign

From Sir Frederick Corfield, QC

Sir, Mr. J. A. Murphy (March 18) implies that in deciding whether or not to participate in (or attend) the Moscow Olympics, members of the Civil Service and Armed Forces are being denied freedom of choice. It has evidently escaped Mr. Murphy's notice (as well as that of leaders of Civil Service Unions and some of the athletes themselves) that in freely choosing a career in the service of the Crown they

undertook loyally to implement the policies of HM Government of the day.

As far as members of the Civil Service are concerned it seems very unlikely, in the light of current policies, that any obstacle would be put in the way of a further exercise of free choice should they wish to resign.

It is a corollary of free choice that its exercise sometimes involves balancing private preference against wider considerations and responsibilities: such choice is not always easy and few would deny that the choice before Olympic athletes is particularly difficult one. Nevertheless those who do decide not to go, of their own volition and as a matter of principle, will be seen to be making real personal sacrifice: that cannot but immensely enhance the respect in which they will be held, the effect of their protests and the comfort it will bring to those suffering from Communist tyranny, whether within or without the legitimate boundaries of the Soviet Union. Would that be no compensation? Yours faithfully, FREDERICK CORFIELD, 2 Paper Buildings, Temple, EC4.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

Personal
Investment and
Finance
pages 18 and 19

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financial news, page 20

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Mr Nott tells top US officials of concern on steel anti-dumping suit

From Frank Vogl
Washington, March 21

Mr John Nott, Secretary of State for Trade, met top administration officials today and expressed concern about the US Steel Corporation's anti-dumping complaint against seven European countries, including Britain.

He discussed this and other trade matters and informed sources suggested that the Americans were aware of the possibility of European retaliation to any new trade protectionist measures and that they were concerned to support a free and fair trading system.

The Secretary of State was due to see Mr Philip Klutznick, Secretary of Commerce, Mr Richard Cooper, Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs and Mr Reuben Askew, Special Trade Representative.

The sources indicated that many officials believe the EEC Commission might be overreacting and exaggerating the dangers of a trade "war" developing.

They said some official statements from Brussels suggested there was a crisis developing in Atlantic trade relations because of steel developments and that neither European governments nor the United States government had this same feeling.

Visit cancelled: Viscount Esmée Davignon, the EEC's Commissioner for Industry, today cancelled a visit to Tunisia to be available for contact with the American administration over the weekend after

today's decision by US Steel, Peter Norman writes.

But Viscount Davignon's action was the only visible indication how seriously Brussels is viewing the American steel company's move. The Commission has apparently decided to play the anti-dumping suits coolly and avoid any steps that might be interpreted as encouraging a trade "war".

The US Steel suit is a significant threat to European exports to America because the products singled out in the complaint account for more than 50 per cent of deliveries.

The Commission also fears that it could threaten the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) consensus of 1977 on steel restructuring, where it was agreed that measures taken to aid the steel industry throughout the world should not endanger traditional international trading patterns.

Although US Steel's decision represents a defeat for the Carter administration in its attempt to ward off such anti-dumping action, the Commission would not like to see Washington scrap its "trigger price" system which is used to keep our cheap steel.

The Brussels argument is that such action could be interpreted as making US Steel's move legitimate and so encourage other steel companies to file anti-dumping suits.

World recession fears head OECD agenda

By Caroline Atkinson

Senior officials from seven major industrialised countries are meeting in Versailles this weekend to discuss their growing fears of a severe world recession.

The meeting, to be held under the aegis of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, was called at the suggestion of the United States.

Mr Charles Schulze, the chairman of President Carter's Council of Economic Advisors, is attending the meeting, as is Sir Douglas Wess, Permanent Secretary of the United Kingdom Treasury.

Last weekend's United States package of anti-inflationary measures, coupled with the American credit squeeze, has now made the prospects for the world economy look extremely bad.

It is widely thought that

there is no chance of avoiding a deep recession in the industrialised world. Western governments are increasingly concerned that the coming economic slowdown will be even more severe than that which followed the first round of oil price rises in 1973.

The jump in oil prices at the end of last year is expected to lead to more persistent surpluses for the exporters, and to have a longer lasting depressing effect on the rest of the world.

Because many governments are now running large public sector deficits it is thought that there is little room for them to offset the deflationary impact of higher oil prices.

Officials at the meeting will prepare for the next economic summit in Venice in June. The seven nations represented are Britain, America, Canada, France, Italy, West Germany and Japan.

Directors call for tougher curbs on secondary action in new Bill

By Patricia Tisdall

Management Correspondent

Directors have joined the Confederation of British Industry in rejecting the Government's proposal to limit secondary strikes. The Institute of Directors has told Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Employment, that it wants all forms of industrial disruption to be confined to the employer involved in the dispute.

Even at the risk of delaying the Employment Bill, which already contains clauses which would ban secondary picketing, the directors want the subsequent proposals on secondary action redrafted. As it stands, the proposed measure would, the institute believes, continue to give legal immunity to trade unionists who take industrial action against any "first" customer or supplier even though they are not themselves involved in the dispute.

Mr Walter Goldsmith, the institute's director general, said in a letter to Mr Prior that the fear was that "because of

the continuation of legal immunity, such action might be seen as having received a stamp of legitimacy—a licence for secondary action".

The letter was in response to a working paper issued by Mr Prior in which comments were requested by yesterday. In the light of these, he intends to insert a new clause in the Employment Bill now before Parliament.

The institute says it recognizes that it is the Government's desire to act now only on aspects of industrial relations legislation in urgent need of amendment.

However, it considers that the immunities envisaged in the proposals are too wide and it regrets that the Government proposals have sought merely to reduce the scale of secondary industrial action rather than removing its legal immunity altogether. It says that a "surge definition of a first supplier or customer" is required at present proposed.

While not going as far as the institute, the CBI also thinks

MFI agreed bid for Status Discount

By Peter Wainwright

MFI Furniture Group, the discount furniture chain led by Mr Arthur Southon, has agreed terms for the takeover of Status Discount, the kitchen unit to self-assembly group run by Mr Edwin Healey. It values Status at around £30m and will disburse many who had been hoping for £5m or so more.

The bid is, however, bound to succeed. Status and Robert Fleming, its financial adviser, consider the offer fair, and the directors and their families with 45.9 per cent of capital are accepting the MFI offer irrevocably. Other shareholders take this to 50.01 per cent.

For every one share in Status holders are offered one share in MFI. These shipped 2p to 73p a share. Since the beginning of 1979 Status shares have swung between 85p and 20p. MFI's shares have moved between 90p and 27p.

Both sides call the deal a merger and the terms are based on respective profit contributions of the two groups to the enlarged group.

Status recently reported a sharp fall in second half profits but in the full year to November 30, 1978-79, they rose from £3.79m to £4.06m on a turnover of nearly £41m. This



Mr Arthur Southon: offering greater resources.



Mr Edwin Healey: seat on MFI board.

Indicated a margin on sales of 9.7 per cent. By November 30, last, borrowings nearly matched shareholders' funds of £7.53m. MFI rules its books on May 31. Pre-tax profits in 1978-79, soared from £5.3m to £13.9m, and in the first six months of this year they went ahead from £6.03m to £8.06m.

The group forecast profits of £18m for the full year. In January, when it reported on the first half year, MFI had no

bank overdraft, but was expected to call on one to pay for a new distribution centre at Northampton, planned to open in the autumn.

On the basis of profits of £4m for Status and £18m for MFI, Status shareholders have done reasonably because they will be getting 23 per cent of the equity in the enlarged group.

The two groups are complementary and have known each

other well for years. Of the three-man Status board, only Mr Healey will be becoming a director of MFI.

Status specializes in kitchen and bedroom furniture while MFI does a similar range to- gether with a wide range of lounge and dining room furniture and upholstery.

Status is localized in the north of England but MFI is strong in the south and in Scotland. Status is claimed to benefit from the greater resources of the MFI group and conditions of employment of staff will not be hurt.

The offer depends on the usual conditions, including no reference to the Monopolies Commission. Trading at both companies is understood to be satisfactory.

The two groups are already closely linked through Humber Kitchens, a leading kitchen equipment maker. Humber, a private company registered in Jersey, is a big supplier to Status, the chief executive of which is Malcolm Healey, a brother of Edwin. Humber is thought to have suffered from the recession in kitchen furniture and Status has lent it money.

Status shares were suspended in the middle of the month at 69p.

Government cuts aid to development agencies

By Peter Hill

Industrial Editor

Cuts in the level of assistance made by the Government to four regional industrial development organizations coupled with measures to improve Whitehall's monitoring of their activities were announced yesterday.

Central government funds to the four organizations in the North West, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, and Devon and Cornwall—are being cut from last year's £629,000 to £542,000 in the new financial year.

The cut, announced by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, is set against the background of the more selective thrust of the Government's regional policy outlined last summer under which a total of £233m is being reduced from regional assistance budgets over the next three years.

Sir Keith said that, after a review within the industry department, it had been decided that the central government grant should be on a pound-for-pound basis, matching the grants provided by local authorities and received from other sources up to a specified maximum. The overall total contribution from central funds would be reduced, and coordination of activities of the four agencies would in future be shared with the county councils involved.

Disbursement of central funds would be based principally on the prospects for prosperity and employment in the regions

against the background of the Government's policy of concentrating assistance on the areas of greatest need.

Last night the decision brought a sharp reaction from the North of England Development Council, which is to consider the implications at a special meeting of its executive within the next few days.

Councillor Maureen Taylor, chairman of the council, said that her first reaction was one of grave concern because the decision came at a time when the region was struggling for survival and when every effort to attract new employment was vital.

The fact that the Government was withdrawing its support was welcome, but, she said, it was perplexing that support should be reduced.

Sir Keith has expressed his concern before Parliament's Select Committee on Industry and Trade about the problems caused by a low level of the department's own inward investment fund, its regional investment bureaux and those of the four major industrial development organizations.

Whitehall grants are being maintained at a low level than previously indicated over the next three years, although in all cases the size of the allocation will increase slightly.

The North of England Development Council will receive £230,000 in the new financial year rising to £250,000 in 1982-83, while Devon and Cornwall Development Bureau's grant will increase from £50,000 to £60,000 over the three years.

Pension fund trustees silent on suspensions

By Peter Wilson-Smith

The trustees of the Electricity Council pension funds met yesterday to hear the reasons for the suspension of Mr Alan Urwin, the funds' investment manager, and Mr William Lund, his deputy.

But the statement issued after the meeting, while designed to reassure contributors to the schemes, has thrown no light on the affair, about which the Electricity Council has remained consistently tight-lipped.

The trustees were given a factual report from Mr Austin Bunch, the chairman of the trustees and deputy chairman of the council, of the events leading up to the suspensions. The statement added: "The trustees unanimously endorsed the actions taken and proposed, and affirmed that the Electricity Council does not in any way affect the viability or strength of the funds and will not adversely affect contributors or pensioners."

Mr Urwin and Mr Lund, employed by the Electricity Council and answerable to the trustees for their decisions as fund managers, have been suspended on full pay since March 3. The suspensions followed a report from Mr Gully, the accountancy firm, on the acquisition in 1978 of the outstanding minority in Westmoreland Investments by the pension funds.

Westmoreland was an unquoted property development company which the electricity

pension funds had supported since 1972 with considerable amounts of money. But it appears that the price paid to buy the outstanding minority placed an excessive valuation on the property group. In particular it was far above the valuation provided by the funds' own valuers.

However, neither Mr Urwin nor Mr Lund has been given an opportunity to put his side of the case. Mr Lund confirmed yesterday: "I haven't seen my employer since we were suspended."

The points likely to be raised in defence of Mr Urwin and Mr Lund are that had Westmoreland been liquidated in 1974-75 as an alternative to investing more money, the funds would have had to put up about £20m to cover guaranteed loans. Furthermore over the years the pension funds have steadily bought properties from Westmoreland and may be sitting on a profit on these purchases of up to £30m.

Both Mr Lund and Mr Urwin feel that they have been extremely badly treated in the affair and would like an opportunity to put their side of the case. "Obviously we want to set the record straight and get back on the job," said Mr Lund, who is acting on the advice of his solicitor provided by the National Association of Local Government Officers, his union.

Yesterday the Electricity Council would give no indication when either the council or the trustees would be meeting with Mr Lund or Mr Urwin.

Meanwhile in London S. G. Warburg and Son, Marsh's merchant bank advisers, commented that they knew of no new problems which could stop the bid.

Mr John Nott, Secretary of State for Trade, is expected to give his decision on whether to refer the bid to the Monopolies Commission next week.

Accountant on board of British Shipbuilders

By Our Industrial Editor

The Government has appointed another "outside" director to the board of British Shipbuilders, the state shipbuilding corporation.

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, announced yesterday that Mr Stanley Harding has been made a part-time member of the corporation's board for two years. The appointment comes one day after it was revealed that the Government is not to renew the charter of Mr Michael Casey, the corporation's chief executive, when his secondment from the Civil Service expires in mid-May.

Mr Harding, a chartered accountant, is director of a number of companies including Hill Samuel, the merchant bankers, and BPB Industries, and was formerly chairman of Cornhill Insurance and finance director of Thomas Tilling, the industrial holding company.

His appointment follows a trend established by the Government with the appointment earlier this year in a part-time

capacity of Mr John Gardiner, chief executive of the Laird Group. Previously the board, both full-time and part-time members, was composed of either senior executives from within the shipbuilding industry or board members from unions associated with the industry.

More changes are expected as the search by Whitehall continues for a successor to Admiral Sir Anthony Griffin, the board chairman, whose contract has been extended, and for the vacancy created by the impending departure of Mr Casey.

There is speculation that among the possible candidates is Mr Robert Atkinson, chairman of the Sheffield-based steel and engineering group of Aurora Holdings. In the early 1960s he was managing director of the William Doxford marine engineering company, part of the Doxford & Sunderland shipbuilding group on Wearside. Yesterday Mr Atkinson said that he had received no offer of the chairmanship.

THE PENTLAND INVESTMENT TRUST LIMITED

A member of the Association of Investment Trust Companies.

	1979	1978
Gross Revenue	£1,942,352	£1,485,376
Earnings per Ordinary Share	6.34p	4.61p
Dividend per Ordinary Share	5.45p	4.55p
Special Dividend per Ordinary Share	0.83p	
Net Asset Value per Ordinary Share	150p	156p
Total Net Assets	£28.2m	£29.2m

EXTRACT FROM STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

REVENUE—Following the removal of Dividend controls on 31st July, 1979 several companies have paid special dividends in respect of previous years. This has allowed us to pay a special, non-recurring dividend of 0.83p to our Ordinary Shareholders.

Excluding these special items Earnings per Ordinary Share have risen from 4.61p in 1978 to 5.51p in 1979 and the total dividend from 4.55p to a recommended 5.45p, increases of 19.5% and 19.8% respectively.

CAPITAL—This has not been an easy year, particularly for overseas investment, because of the abolition of the Investment Currency Premium which stood at 42.625% on 31st December, 1978 and because of the strengthening of sterling against the dollar. The fall in Net Asset Value per Ordinary Share from 156p to 150p should be viewed against this background.

ENERGY AND ENERGY-RELATED STOCKS—At the year end our investments in Oil and Oil-related companies represented 17.3% of our total net assets. If, however, we include companies whose main business is Non-Energy-Related, but which have substantial interests in Oil and Gas Reserves, our overall stake in the Energy sector is approximately 25%. It is interesting to note that over 40% by value of our overseas portfolio is in this sector.

POSITION AT 29th FEBRUARY, 1980

Net Asset Value per Ordinary Share	164p
Total Net Assets	£30.6m

Geographical Distribution

UK	66%
North America	27%
Australia	4%
Japan	1%
Other	2%

Copies of the Accounts are available on request.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 3 Albany Place, Edinburgh, EH2 4NQ on Tuesday, 15th April, 1980 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

EAST OF SCOTLAND INVESTMENT MANAGERS LIMITED.
3 ALBANY PLACE, EDINBURGH, EH2 4NQ.

PRICE CHANGES

L & Ross 10p to 30p	Gibbs, A. 7p to 85p
10p to 61p	10p to 85p
6p to 27p	10p to 225p
10p to 30p	10p to 515p
4p to 31p	

Hill 25p to 610p	Rio Tinto Zinc 23p to 345p
4p to 30p	25p to 675p
5p to 810c	4p to 33p
10p to 30p	3p to 580c
20p to 195p	2p to 10p

THE POUND

Bank buys	Bank sells	Bank buys	Bank sells
1.25	1.28	1.10	1.13
2.05	2.08	1.10	1.13
30.40	30.40	1.10	1.13
71.25	71.25	1.10	1.13
2.61	2.61	1.10	1.13
13.25	13.25	1.10	1.13
8.90	8.90	1.10	1.13
9.82	9.82	1.10	1.13
4.28	4.28	1.10	1.13
89.00	89.00	1.10	1.13
11.35	11.35	1.10	1.13
1.13	1.13	1.10	1.13
1985.00	1985.00	1.10	1.13
565.00	565.00	1.10	1.13
4.65	4.65	1.10	1.13

Minister backs £718 course to train women for executive roles

Course for managers with not a man in sight

The "Women's Lib" lobby in industry has had another success in its campaign to smooth the path for women to become senior managers. And they have done it in style with the support of a senior government minister, two government departments and one of the biggest engineering employers' organizations in the country.

Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Employment, has designated the West Midlands Engineering Employers' Association as a training body under the terms of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. For more simply he has permitted the association to discriminate against men by holding a training course exclusively for women.

It is the first time the minister has given such a dispensa-

tion to an employers' organization, although a number of privately-owned training consultant companies already operate women-only courses.

Two six-week courses are planned beginning on April 14 and will cost students £718 each. But the Manpower Services Commission has agreed to meet half the cost of those already in employment.

Those without a job need not despair. The commission has let it be known that it will also sponsor a limited number of out of work candidates with management potential.

The possibility of children— and later their welfare while mother it at work—has long been the biggest deterrent to women becoming top managers. Many boards are not prepared to invest in the training of

managers only to see them forced to leave when they are beginning to repay this confidence.

The Birmingham course organizers have persuaded the Manpower Services Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission to make arrangements for existing children to be cared for while their mother is in the classroom.

Appropriately, the Equal Opportunities spokesman is a woman, Mrs D. Trembath. Yesterday she said: "The West Midlands initiative is a tremendous step forward for women."

As the first of its kind in the country its progress will be followed with a great deal of interest by other employers' organizations. Birmingham has already had a considerable number of enquiries."

The course prospectus contains at least one series of lectures which should please the "women's libbers". It is "to assist delegates to identify and overcome the barriers which impede the progress of women in management."

The Equal Opportunities Commission will doubtless also be interested in obtaining information of any such practices the tutors have turned up.

A select few students who catch the eye by their dedication and aptitude will be offered research projects at the end of the course. Perhaps one of them could be given the task of monitoring the progress of students on their road to senior management.

Clifford Webb

PERSONAL INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

Grouse

A recent article in these pages on the subject of mortgages for flats, explained the difficulty of enforcing positive obligations, such as repairing covenants on the sale of freehold property. This is an important factor in deterring building societies from advancing money to help finance the purchase of freehold flats. The issue has drawn the wrath of reader Mr C. E. O'Beirne.

He writes: "It is worth noting by way of contrast that throughout much of the Commonwealth and the United States of America, where broadly similar conditions prevail, the governments concerned have shown no reluctance to legislate to cure this anomaly since the movement for reform began in Australia in 1961.

"The legislation in general provides for what is known as a condominium or strata title. This would come into being as soon as

the owners of the property, intended to be turned into flats for sale, registered with the local land registry a plan showing in detail the proposed subdivision into individual units and those remaining areas which will be held by all the owners in common, for example, passages and stairs.

"When the plan is accepted by the registry, the owners automatically become a company for the purpose of managing the common property and they must ensure that those parts of the structure are properly administered in accordance with rules which are embodied in the legislation.

"Schemes of this kind have proved successful in practice. It is a pity that there is little reason at present to imagine that they are likely to make any significant impact on the English legal outlook which is traditionally resistant to novel thought."

Pre-Budget taxation

Deadline for those overseas trips

April 5 could be a crucial date for anybody who has been abroad for a significant length of time in 1979-80 or who intends to go overseas in the coming tax year. Any end of year tax round-up must cover, however briefly, the jungle of overseas residence, income and gains.

This really is a complicated subject involving a bewildering permutation of residence, ordinary residence and domicile with income, transfers and gains. Nevertheless, it is worth briefly showing a few warning lights and mentioning some of the problems and opportunities of living or working abroad.

If you are resident in the United Kingdom and spend more than 20 "qualifying" days (which are defined for these purposes) working overseas, you may be able to claim an allowance of 25 per cent with respect to those earnings; which is another way of saying that 25 per cent of those earnings are tax free.

Since the 1978 Finance Act, self-employed people as well as employees have been able to claim this allowance.

If, for example, you earn £12,000 in this year and spend 60 qualifying days outside the United Kingdom, the amount of income qualifying for the 25 per cent allowance would almost certainly be:

$$60 \times \frac{1}{5} \times £12,000 = £1,920$$

Of this £1,920 25 per cent, that is £480, would be tax free. If your tax rate were 30 per cent this would be an effective tax saving of £148.

If you are close to the 30-day threshold needed in order to claim the 25 per cent allowance, but have not quite reached this level, you might consider whether you could bring forward that business trip which you intended to make later on in the spring so

that you can clock up those extra days by April 5.

Remember, you have to be outside the United Kingdom at midnight on any of the qualifying days and, for trips abroad of less than a week, each day must be substantially devoted to the business duties.

Assuming you spend a continuous period of 365 days working overseas, then you may receive a 100 per cent allowance for your overseas earnings. In other words the non-United Kingdom earnings are tax free. Although you can come back to Britain during the 365-day period, the rules are complicated and it is quite easy to stay in United Kingdom too long and unwittingly have the allowance reduced to only 25 per cent.

But you achieve a much more satisfactory situation where you can arrange to be employed overseas under a full time service contract and for a period covering at least an entire tax year for instance April 5, 1980, to April 6, 1981. You would then normally be treated as "non resident and not ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom".

There are important advantages to this particular status: you are not subject to British income tax on your earned income or on any investment income arising from outside Britain or from certain United Kingdom gilts. Moreover, you should not be subject to capital gains tax on any gains on either United Kingdom or overseas assets, but you should not take for granted your freedom from capital gains tax unless the visit abroad is for several years.

Consequently, if you are considering an overseas tour of duty which is likely to start either in the spring or early summer of 1980, see whether you can bring forward the date of departure to before April 6.

Then, if your overseas employment were cut short for some reason, a not uncommon event, your chances of having completed the full tax year would be very much greater.

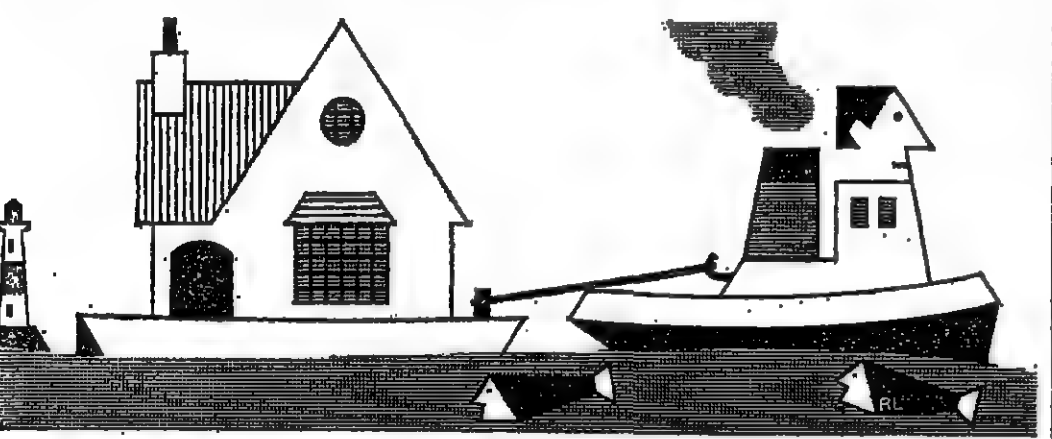
If you are going abroad, but you will not have a full time overseas employment, then the process of achieving this useful status of not resident and not ordinarily resident in United Kingdom is likely to be more protracted and will not particularly depend on mere absence for a complete tax year.

The Inland Revenue will want to see a clearer demonstration of your intention to become a genuinely foreign resident, for instance, by setting up your home abroad. You can come back to United Kingdom for occasional visits during a period of non residence without affecting your status, but these visits should not average more than three months a year (with an absolute maximum of six months in any one year).

A word of warning to overseas readers who are already classed as "not resident and not ordinarily resident" in the United Kingdom. Supporting your status by having a United Kingdom accommodation which is available for your own use and at the same time you are not a full time employee overseas, you could lose your non-resident status for the entire tax year by just one day's visit here. So if you have not come back so far in 1979-80 but you simply must come back to United Kingdom soon, wait until after April 6.

Next week we shall all know the Chancellor's proposals—giving us a few days for last minute action before April 5.

Donby Bloch and Raymand Godfrey



Investor's week

Dividends up despite gloom

I cannot yet use that portentous phrase, sadder than owls or the midnight blast, "I told you so," because this week the FT index only fell from 438.9 to 429.9. Yet market operators, suddenly turned sellers, have been upsetting all who will listen with stories of brokers putting their Kew Gardens houses up for sale, of jobbers, the wholesalers of shares, unloading depreciating stock at any price, and of companies scheming cash calls on shareholders because banks were turning against them.

One or two people do have empty wallets. Only a week or two ago Siebens was 930p. Today they are little better than 500p. Australian wining issues such as Samantha have halved, annoying "investors" not only in London but in Wall Street and Hong Kong too.

Yet we are still a long way from 350 on the FT index. Or are we? The index has only to drop a further 18 per cent.

One prophecy I avoid—exactly when directors start cutting dividends as if tomorrow was already here. Few are yet listening to the voice of the Bank of England. This week it discussed the way in come-seeking managers of big

funds intimidate boardrooms into paying dividends they can't really afford.

It is always so easy — for a time — to postpone painful decisions. A company, talking to itself, is never short of permanent capital, just temporarily short of the ready stuff. Banks, saddled with responsibility of keeping industry afloat, are ready to oblige.

It is not as if the accountants who should know about these things had agreed on how to adjust for inflation to give the unschooled an idea of how money can flow out of a business when profits (in money terms) are rising, let alone dropping.

So one company after another, has openly laughed at rival schemes of inflation adjusting, and piously affirmed that they will comply when one is agreed on.

On April Fool's Day their wish will be granted. From then Exposure Draft 24 will be what all accountants will insist on. For many finance directors the game will indeed be up at the worst possible time.

Meanwhile dividend increases rival each other in size. Sturdy Tube Investments found slump and strikes nearly sweeping

away its profits last year adjusting for inflation but up went the dividend by 9 per cent.

Brooke Bond, a disconcertingly jerky performer over the years, has raised the dividend 37 per cent. BTR's profits mushroomed 43 per cent and the distribution 57 per cent.

Even Barrett Developments, the market's favourite house-builder to take a tumble, had a 20 per cent bigger interim payment. Stone-Platt the engineer (no final, annual loss) looked lonely.

But not for long. Soon we move from companies reporting with a December year-end to those who rule their books in March. Sooner inflation will reach more than 20 per cent a year. According to the Department of Employment, average earnings are already there.

The Bank of England warns us that present policies (including dear money) will persist. World interest rates may yet go higher. Factories close but industrial archaeology booms. Will the Chancellor help industry next Wednesday? There will be howls if he fails.

Peter Wainwright

MAIN CHANGES OF THE WEEK

Year's High	Year's Low	Company	Change	Comment
			Rises	
127p	77p	Avana	5p to 119p	Bid gossip
900p	320p	Guthrie	40p to 805p	Same bid-hope
303p	170p	Multhead	5p to 190p	Talk of Tyco bid
356p	148p	Tricentral	8p to 282p	Good annual figs
56p	32p	UDT	5p to 55p	Bid hopes
			Falls	
150p	98p	Bowling CT	6p to 126p	Monop Commission
				ret fear
400p	218p	Furness Withy	5p to 381p	Fear of ref for Tung bid
354p	202p	Simon Engin	10p to 228p	Sector weak
118p	36p	Stone-Platt	61p to 38p	Loss: no final div
223p	85p	Stothert & P	21p to 85p	Loss: no interim

THE TIMES
Over 74%
of Times readers
purchase wines and
spirits for home
consumption.

HOFF of HEYBRIDGE HEATH



THE PRE-BUDGET
PANIC SHOPPERS ARE
OUT EARLY THIS YEAR...

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD
DO SOME SHOPPING
BY NEXT WEDNESDAY

THERE BY A DAYS
OF THE ARCHBISHOP
CANTERBURY GO

Income bonds

Two more shopping days to go...

There are two shopping days left before Budget day if you want to take advantage of the attractive yields available on short-term income bonds.

It is widely assumed that these bonds will be axed in the Budget next week. And for once the ax will fall with the approval of the life assurance industry in general.

The Life Offices' Association has made no secret of the fact that it views these bonds with favour. It is adamant in offering these bonds can afford to pay these returns, thanks in part to life assurance premium relief.

The L.O.A. vary that any government move against these bonds might affect the industry as a whole. It is adamant that this relief was and is primarily designed for longer term contracts of 10 years or more—and should not be used to make gains on short term investments.

In anticipation that they will not survive Wednesday un-

scathed, companies offering the bonds are closing them down on Tuesday or Wednesday morning. But until that time you can get between 18 and 19.5 per cent net of basic rate tax on a one-year bond or 14 to 15.25 per cent for two-year money.

Transatlantic Life has recently introduced a one-year bond on a joint-life basis yielding 19.1 per cent. If one of the parties dies during the course of the year, benefits will remain completely unaffected for the rest of the term. But you have to be legally married to get on this particular bandwagon.

Even if you don't actually pay tax you are still eligible for premium relief so you can take advantage of these yields. But you cannot add insult to injury by claiming the tax paid on your investment (income is automatically paid net of basic rate tax) back from the Revenue.

SHORT-TERM INCOME BONDS

Company	Minimum Investment	Yield*
1-year bonds		
Centenary Life	£1,000	18.00%
Liberty Life	£500	18.01%
Property Equity and Life	£1,000	18.08%
Transatlantic Life	£1,000	19.01%
Transatlantic Life	£1,000	18.25%
Windsor Life	£500	18.65%
2-year bonds		
Liberty Life	£500	16.01%
Scandia Life	£2,000	14.00%
Transatlantic Life	£1,000	15.25%
Windsor Life	£500	15.00%

*Net of basic rate tax. Joint life basis.

If you do make a last minute dash for these bonds, make sure that the company concerned can process your application in

time. Scandia Life is closing its bond on Monday to make sure all administration is wound up before the Budget.

Also remember that these rates are not guaranteed and will alter with any change in the level of tax relief on life assurance premiums. The Chancellor may decide to cut the relief from its peak level of 17.5 per cent against a basic rate tax of 30 per cent.

At present there is a gentleman's agreement between the authorities and the life assurance industry that there will be some delay—probably a year—before such an announcement becomes a reality. So even if you see a reduction in the yield on your two-year bond from April next year.

Sylvia Morris

Need for a will • Undiscovered assets

I have been married for 30 years and worked full-time for 20 of them. I have no children. The matrimonial home is in my husband's name and he refuses to make a will. Could you please tell me if the whole value of the house will be included in his estate if he dies before me? The house is by far our greatest asset, the market value having risen from the £13,000 we paid 12 years ago to well above £50,000 now. We are still paying off the mortgage. (JCE, Sussex.)

Readers' Forum

This specialist readers' service has been compiled with the help of Eric Brunet, John Drummond, Vera Di Palma and Ronald Irving

hold and what interest has been earned to date. If they hold a substantial sum (say over £500) and fail to place it on deposit, they themselves must pay the client the interest which ought to have been earned. Deliberately spinning out a case to earn higher fees would (if proved) be serious misconduct. If you have any ground for such suspicion you should ask the Law Society to investigate.

Yes, so long as the house remains in his name only, its entire value, less any amount still outstanding on mortgage, would be included in your husband's estate. This need not worry you if your husband has no parents, brothers, sisters, nephews or nieces. It would, however, be a disaster if he has children. The rules for the distribution of the estate of intestates provide that in this case the children's widow takes all. But, if any such relative survives him, it is conceivable that the net value of the house could be reduced to 12.5 per cent. You open the first £55,000 of the estate plus half the rest; the relatives take the other half. It would be more business-like of your husband to make a will or at least to put the house in joint names.

For some years before his death my father was confined to a nursing home and for simplicity, transferred assets as he had to my keeping, making a will in my favour as his sole son and heir. For this reason I did not consider it necessary to social security benefits due to the deceased.

Consequently, you would be entitled to have paid over to you all the assets you mention on presentation of the will with a copy of the death certificate. Initially send a photocopy of the will, certifying it as a true and correct copy. If they insist on seeing the original, you can then send it by recorded delivery.

My stepfather has been dead eight months and his perfectly straightforward estate has yet to be cleared up by solicitors. Could you please tell me whether interest on the deceased's money held by solicitors belongs to the estate or to the solicitor? I am afraid my mother has the impression that they are spinning things out as long as possible (a) to earn interest for themselves, and (b) to enable them to charge a higher fee. (KFJ, London.)

The delay may not be the solicitors' fault so write to them requesting an explanation. In no circumstances are they entitled to retain interest earned on a client's money held by them, so ask them also what sums they

My sister has been separated from her husband for more than five years and was proposing to sue for divorce. He has now disappeared and her efforts to discover his new address have been unsuccessful. Does the law enable a person in her position to sue for divorce or can her husband prevent her so doing by remaining in hiding? (CS, Cambridge.)

Yes, the law does make provision for those in your sister's position to obtain divorces but the courts are reluctant to pronounce a decree and alter personal status without a petition having been served on the respondent spouse. Every reasonable effort must be made to find the present whereabouts of the husband. It may be possible to locate him through the DHSS who will forward letters and, if your sister is claiming maintenance for herself or children, the court may request the DHSS or Inland Revenue to divulge the husband's address. Failing all else, an application for substituted service or for leave to dispense with service may be made.

Fixed interest investment

Setting money aside for future tax bills

The interest rate paid on certificates of deposit is now 17.0 per cent, guaranteed for two years—one of the highest-yielding investments on the market.

These certificates are a useful way to plan for your future tax bills. They are open to companies and individuals alike and can be used to pay any type of tax except Value Added Tax or employee Paye.

The minimum deposit is £2,000 for starters. You can then add to this as you wish. You can buy certificates from your local tax collector's office, and they earn interest immediately. This rate is reviewed every two years during the six-year life of the certificate.

When you get your tax bill, you simply send the bill and the certificate to the tax inspectors who will inform you if you owe them any money or

send you another certificate for any excess amount paid.

There is one drawback. If you overestimate the amount of tax you need to pay and think you'll treat yourself with the extra, the interest rate is reduced to 13.5 per cent. You only get the full 17 per cent if you use the money towards tax payments.

A further point to remember is that the interest, which is not paid out but added to the value of your certificate when you actually pay the bill, is taxable at your marginal rate of tax and also attracts the investment income surcharge. Unfortunately the tax man does not give you a "good citizen's exemption" for holding a load of these certificates.

But this does not detract from the fact that they are attractive investments offering more than bank deposits, gilts

and National Savings Certificates. They also save you from having to pay interest on overdue tax demands.

The Treasury, which administers the scheme, changes the rates frequently in line with other money market rates. Over the past year the rate has altered no less than 16 times, between the range of 12 and the latest peak of 17 per cent.

Now there is over £560m invested in these certificates. Most of it comes from companies rather than individuals. If the rates were unattractive compared with other money market rates, companies, which are much quicker off the mark than personal investors in finding the most lucrative home for their money, simply would not invest in them.

Why cannot the flexibility of this government-run savings instrument be extended to the

more individual orientated National Savings Bank? The problem is one of administration. Not only are they dealing with over 20 million accounts, under parliamentary regulations a minimum of one month's notice has to be given for a change in the rate. During periods of volatile interest rates there could be a time when the yield changed again before the previously set rate had come into operation.

Although the Department of National Savings has become more market-oriented in recent years, cynics might well feel that while tax certificates of deposit, aimed at professional investors, have to be sold to the National Savings for the general body of unsophisticated savers are not under the same pressure.

SM

Round-up

Greater flexibility from new insurance policies

As promised, Lloyd's Bank has launched its International Technology unit trust, which will invest in companies likely to benefit from advanced technology and those involved in such areas as fuel saving or alternative sources of energy.

The portfolio will be mainly invested in the United States and Japan, although there will be some United Kingdom investment.

With capital growth the principal objective, the estimated yield on the fund is 3 per cent. Charges on the fund include a 5 per cent initial charge and annual levy of 0.5 per cent. The managers remain the right to increase this to 0.75 per cent. Minimum investment is £250.

The managers hope that this trust will be as well received as the Smaller Companies and Recovery Trust, the first specialist trust launched by the bank in February. The fund attracted £1.2m in the first three weeks.

● Evidence that the life assurance industry is changing its

spots and becoming more flexible to the needs of policyholders is slowly but surely coming to light. The latest example is from Eagle Star with its Build Up Cover Plan. The plan provides a five-year term assurance with many useful options subject to the maximum of £50,000 sum assured. At the end of every five years insurance cover can be renewed or increased.

During the five-year period there is the additional option to increase insurance cover should the policyholder marry, become a parent or householder. To meet future needs there is also a conversion option whereby all or part of the plan can be converted to endowment, whole of life, or straight-term assurance, and not subject to the £50,000 limit. All the options are available without any further medical evidence of health.

Such a package from the

industry is commendable. But it is expensive compared with ordinary term assurance and brings the pocket of the young family man with family commitments and a mortgage.

A better course in these circumstances would be to take out an ordinary five-year term policy, and take up the package later. After all, during this time the policyholder's health is unlikely to deteriorate: the premium rates are the same for all those under 35.

The priv thought: Lady Baskerv

Another brief glimpse of the everyday folk in Sticklepath, moor beauty spot, by this extract from Lady Baskerville, the Great Crimpen M ment Club.

Who would have been there more than the Great Crimpen M ment Club? Referendum was held for some time, I can believe it. We had committee meeting after committee meeting. It was brilliant of the Sibling to suggest a investment manager she was thoroughly as the fact that in the portfolio the Ad bene has so sweetly a secretary and I, what we would do w

Most of the share have got off to a but it is a pity about the fact that in the wrong time, but it is early days yet. Sprocket has done well, Adrian said where to go but in there are rumours of a terribly low say. When I contact over the telephone said: "Well, one can all the time." So my a charming sense of

The fly in the ch is that there are still in the village. Allied Elderberry I be on the cards. Of course is quite imp that loathsome Kev is not only quite but completely phas So, clearly, the company and convenor and shop s on the investment if there is indeed a club's own shareho become a focus for a difficult enough the village. But if they are goin each other's throats industrial dispute, meetings will be a

One would have even the remotest kn from the view of affairs. Basil is a tom read when it comes Between him and hi take Rosemary Qui times. I really do w the who was of ou Basil confines himse from the fact that the state of the chur

Brian Thrift is sane, as one might the local manager o Impermeable - Assur the rest of the comi suddenly needed Pluckitt is to self-i cannot be believed, at that we have not depo thing with his prei moor Building Soci Blotz is quite aston don't know how a manager of the post office; she has t of an earwig.

Sam Spender, he of rag, never leaves his one gathers, while officer Scrubbs chain command needed those riots at Dartmo so neither of them evt Basically the committe seems to be consi crooks and dimwits, m completely needed being beloved Agatha Thrift, although he is boring that it would tornado in his brief, wake him up.

One soldiers on what one fashio definitely in need of a support. I have a sigh of doom about the who when it comes to th This morning when down for breakfast P seized the Financial Ti where it lay on the and savaged it to pieces She hadn't touched a mail—none of the bills even a horrid letter Inland Revenue. All d are intelligent and she so than most. Maybe psychic as well, like Bob Beckman's Old Sheppard, William of who picked shares a himself a fortune a fe ago. After all, he can Cornwall and we now E selves living next to a ti so maybe it's something with water.

Anyway, when I can this morning and saw caust of pink all over had a distinct frisson, a thinking of initiating a co-opt. Bogles on the mites.

Wouldn't it be fabulou Hound of the Bask became once more a cre be reckoned with—but th in a different and more role?

Francis Kins

[illegible]

IE & GARDEN

RICH HIGH-BACK
DITION. SAVE 20%

1790
1790
1600

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Law Report March 21 1980

Chancery Division

Court's discretion in
face of fears
of industrial action

Howard E. Perry & Co Ltd v
British Railways Board
Before Sir Robert Megarry,
Vice-Chancellor

[Judgment delivered March 17].
Howard E. Perry & Co Ltd, steel
stockholders, of Wiltshire, West
Midlands, were granted an
order that the British Railways
Board should allow them to take
some 500 tons of steel held up by
the board at its Wolverhampton
and Brimley Hill depots because
the board feared industrial action
by the National Union of Railways
and General Workers would be
used if attempts were made by the
board to have it delivered.

Mr Alexander Irvine, QC and Mr
Alaric Dalziel for Perry; Mr D.
Gidley Scott for the railways
board.

THE LORDSHIP said that the
board had refused to comply with
Perry's demands for the steel
because of the steelworkers' strike,
and the attitude of the National
Union of Railwaysmen, to which
many of the board's employees
belonged.

Mr Irvine said that all Perry
asked was that the board should
permit them, with their own vehicles,
equipment and employees, to enter
the board's depots and remove
the steel themselves. The board
had not suggested there would be
any objection apart from "trade
union difficulties".

Mr Irvine's case was that the
steel was Perry's, and they were
entitled to possession of it, it lay
in the board's premises, and yet
the board was refusing to deliver
it or allow Perry to collect it. The
board had accordingly committed
what used to be the tort of conversion
and now, by virtue of the
Torts (Interference with Goods)
Act 1977, section 1, was called
"wrongful interference with
goods".

Perry claimed an order for
delivery up of the steel and damages:
section 3(2)(a). By section
4(2) and Order 29, rule 2A of the
Rules of the Supreme Court, the
court had power to make an interlocutory
order for delivery up of the
steel.

Mr Gidley Scott contended that
on the facts the board had committed
no tort and was committing
none. It was accepted that
before 1977 the board would have
committed the tort of detinue but
that that tort had now been
abolished by the 1977 Act and the
new statutory tort of wrongful
interference with goods did not
include a mere refusal to deliver,
as had occurred in the present
case. It was held, then, that the
Act might on one view be said to
have blundered by removing from
the sphere of tort some acts which
previously were tortious, without
any apparent reason.

Counsel reasoned that section 1
defined wrongful interference as
"conversion of goods (whether or not
trover), trespass to goods", and
negligence or (subject to section 2)
any other tort so far as it
resulted in damage to goods or
to an interest in goods. Section
2(1), which must be one of the
shortest sections on the statute
book, simply stated "Deduction
is abolished".

Mr Gidley Scott was saying that
what the board had done, though
detinue under the old law, was not
conversion under that law, and so
was not wrongful interference with
goods under the present law, and
the case did not fall within section
2(1), which said that "An action
lies in conversion for loss or
destruction of goods which a
bailee has allowed to happen in
breach of his duty to his bailor",
as there had been no destruction
or loss.

Counsel said that there was no
conversion if the reason for the
refusal to release the goods was a
genuine or reasonable fear, unless
that meant the fear of industrial
action. He accepted that there
could be a conversion if the
fear induced a withholding
of the steel for a long time,
measured in months or years, but
not if merely for a matter of days
or weeks; and he said that the
present case fell within the latter
category, though he could not
prophesy when the strike of steel-
workers would end.

The board was in effect saying:
"We admit the steel is yours
and that you are entitled to possession
of it; yet because we fear
industrial action against us if we
permit you to remove it, we have
refused to allow you to collect it
for some weeks now, despite your
demands, and we will continue
to refuse to allow you to collect it
until our fears have been removed."

Looking at the matter as one of
principle, the Lordship said that

the board's refusal to deliver the
steel was a conversion, and that
the board was liable to damages.
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Garage is not a factory

Post Office v Oxford City
Council

Garage premises constructed or
adapted to supply the require-
ments of members of the public
who sought to buy motor cars,
spare parts or fuel and to obtain
repairs and servicing of cars were
not a factory but were a retail
establishment for the purposes of
the Rating Surcharge (Exemption)
Regulations, 1974, Lord Justice
Templeman stated in the Court of
Appeal.

The court allowed an appeal by
Oxford City Council from the
Divisional Court which allowed
the appeal of the Post Office from
a decision of Oxford City justices
in March 1977 to issue distress
warrants for the rating surcharge for
£26,086 in respect of premises
known as Morris Garage, St
Alban, Oxford.

LORD JUSTICE TEMPLEMAN,
in a reserved judgment, said that
the garage premises, comprising a
car showroom, repair shops,
stores, a petrol filling area and a
motor car wash, were commercial
premises. They had not been
used since December, 1975, and
the city council imposed rates
surcharge on the Post Office, the
present owners, who claimed
exemption because the premises
were constructed as a factory, or
similar to a factory, for use mainly
for industrial purposes.

The object of rates surcharging
was to encourage owners to make
use of commercial property, to
protect rating authorities against

loss of revenue and to discourage
a developer from keeping vacant
commercial property in a city
center. Rating authorities could
claim exemption from surcharge
hereditaments constructed or
adapted as factories, mills or
other premises of a similar
character for use for industrial
purposes.

No authority was cited on the
issue whether a garage fall within
the exemption; nor did the history
of rating legislation shed any
light on the problem.

Garage premises constructed to
attract or supply the needs of
members of the public seeking to
buy or sell motor cars, spare parts,
fuel and services were not similar
to a factory but were similar to a
shop.

The court was asked to consider
whether a garage was a factory for
the purposes of the rating surcharge
regulations. The court found that
the garage was not a factory for
the purposes of the regulations.

The court found that the garage
was not a factory for the purposes
of the rating surcharge regulations.

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was not a factory for the purposes
of the rating surcharge regulations.

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